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LIVES OF THE
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Memorial to the Venerable Bede
in Roker Cliff Park, Sunderland
Erected 1904

LIVES OF
THE FIRST FIVE ABBOTS OF
WEARMOUTH & JARROW:
BENEDICT, CEOLFRID, EOSTERWINE, SIGFRID,
AND HUETBERT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF
THE VENERABLE BEDE.

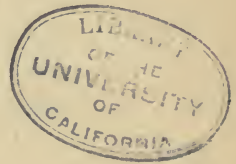
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

BY THE
REV. PETER WILCOCK.

WITH APPENDICES.

SUNDERLAND:
HILLS & COMPANY, 19 FAWCETT STREET.

1910.



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GENERAL

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

WITH a few verbal alterations this edition is a literal transcript of the original, which was printed and published by George Garbutt, of Sunderland, in 1818. Facsimiles are given of the original engraved title page, with its interesting illustration of the Church of Monkwearmouth at that date, and also of the old monument in the Galilee Chapel of the Cathedral of Durham.

In addition to the Appendix by the Author, other Appendices are given describing the Church as it now stands, a short account of the Bibles written at the sister monasteries under the direction of Ceolfrid, an equally brief account of the Memorial Cross, erected in 1904, to the memory of the Venerable Bede, and some brief notes on the life of the Rev. Peter Wilcock. For the last four Appendices Mr. James Patterson is responsible.

THE LIVES
of the
Abbots of Wearmouth,
Translated from Ven^{ble} Bede

BY

The Rev. D. Wilson.



Molson Sculp^t

MONKWEARMOUTH CHURCH.

1818.

[FACSIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL TITLE.]



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ADDRESS.

THE following translation was originally intended for private use ; nor was it undertaken with any other view than that of contributing materials towards a General History of the place, where the celebrated monastery to which it refers formerly flourished.

By the advice of friends, the translator was, however, induced to present it respectfully to the public, as a valuable monument of ancient biography, which he has reason to think was either never before published, or was at least no longer extant in the English language.

The subject, he trusts, cannot but excite an interest in the minds of such as delight in the investigation of religious affairs.

For the history of the foundation, and of the various transactions of one of the first and principal religious communities established in this island, presents to the reader many faithful

testimonies of the principles revered by our Saxon ancestors. It displays, also, their fervent piety, and describes the original design and discipline of the monastic institute ; and is one of those instances, to use the words of a Protestant divine,* which may serve "to rescue a set of very deserving men from the unjust obloquy with which they have been pursued for ages."

With respect to the language in which it is presented, the translator has aimed at nothing further than expressing in as easy a style as he was able, the import of the original. If he has succeeded in this point, the object he proposed to himself is accomplished. In some passages he derived considerable advantage from a manuscript relating to the Abbots and monastery of Wearmouth, of which the use was allowed him by a friend.

After all, though he has done his best, he does not presume to flatter himself that his

* The Rev. John Sharp, translator of *Malmsbury's Book of Kings*. Pref. p. xvii. The frequent citations from *Malmsbury* in the following work, are taken from his translation.

production is void of faults. But on this head he hopes for some indulgence from the public; and in justice to himself he ought to notice, that he was hurried a little in the translation, which was printed in the summer of last year, with the numbers of the history for which it was prepared.

He has since composed the life of Venerable Bede, and would have presented the whole to the public some time ago, but for unavoidable interruptions. This apology he conceives to be required, as several persons paid their subscriptions last year.

As the tower of Monkwearmouth Church is an undoubted remnant of the ancient building, an engraved title-page, containing a plate of it, has been given by the advice of the person with whom the idea of this work originated.

PETER WILCOCK.

THE LIFE OF
VENERABLE BEDE.

By way of introduction to this little work, the translator has deemed it advisable to prefix to it the subsequent short account of the life and writings of its venerable author.

Beda, or Bede,* the faithful biographer of the eminent abbots whose names are here recorded,

* In the vernacular language of the Anglo-Saxons, his name appears to have been Bedan, for so it is written in many ancient manuscripts.

Nearly contemporary with him two other priests of the same name, but of far less note, are celebrated for their sanctity. The first of these is honourably mentioned in our author's life of St. Cuthbert, under the title of the elder Bede, and was a monk of Lindisfarne; the other flourished in the reign of Charlemagne.

The period which intervened between the eras of these two worthies witnessed the more illustrious virtues of that Bede, the circumstances of whose life we have endeavoured to collect, or more properly to glean from the scattered fragments and incidental remarks of ancient, but not contemporary writers.

and the light of the age in which he lived, merits himself a distinguished rank in their history. For under their tuition he became eminent in every virtue which rendered them illustrious ; whilst by the brilliancy of his learning he outshone all his contemporaries, and even, to use the words of Malmsbury, dazzled the whole universe. So extraordinary, in short, were his abilities, and so wonderful his accomplishments, that, if we consider the rude and barbarous state of the country in which he lived, he may reasonably be thought to have been raised by Providence for the specific purpose of being the guide, support, and ornament of the Anglo-Saxon church.

This great man was born about the year six-hundred and seventy-three, within the possessions of the monastery soon after founded by

For though Bede was everywhere extolled, even before his death, by panegyrists and admirers, no one who lived in the same age ventured to publish his life ; either because they despaired of doing justice to his memory, or because the life of one who had spent the whole of his days in tranquility and retirement, offered but scanty materials to the pen of a biographer.

All, therefore, that can now be gathered concerning the Venerable Bede, one of the brightest luminaries of antiquity, is rather a rude and imperfect sketch, drawn from a few modest remarks of his own, the brief notices of posterior writers, and the account given of his last illness by his disciple Cuthbert, than a full and complete delineation of his life and character.

Benedict Biscop on the banks of the river Wear.* Of the rank and condition of his parents in society, no intelligence has been transmitted to us ; but whatever they may have been, of their distinguished piety a doubt is not to be entertained, since it is clearly evinced from the very early attention which they paid to his morals and education.

For at the tender age of seven, preferring the welfare of their child to the gratification of parental fondness, they devoted him to the service of Heaven, in the neighbouring monastery of Wearmouth. Here he was initiated in the first rudiments of literature, and trained up to the austere discipline of the cloister ; in the strict observance of which his whole course from this early period to the hour of his death, was one continued model of perfection.

After a residence at Wearmouth of no long duration, our virtuous youth was removed to the establishment at Jarrow, and committed to the care and direction of the pious Ceolfrid. Thus, like another Samuel, the devout Bede

* The name of the village honoured by the birth of Bede is now unknown. Some eminences, however, about a mile distant from Gibside, on the north bank of the Derwent, bear his name, being called Bede's Hills : near them, it is probable was the place of his nativity.

[Scholars are now generally agreed that he was born in the neighbourhood of Monkwearmouth.—ED. *present Edition*.]

was consecrated from his infancy to God ; and sheltered within the precincts of the sanctuary from the snares, allurements, and contagion of vice, he grew up in innocence and holiness of life, daily increasing in wisdom and favour with God and men.

How diligently his hours were employed in this religious asylum, and how intense and persevering his application must have been, some idea may be formed from that high pre-eminence of celebrity in learning, to which he forced his way, notwithstanding the heavy load of conventual duties under which he laboured, and the obstacles opposed to his progress by the barbarism with which he was on every side surrounded. Nor was the high reputation he obtained without foundation. No, his acquirements were real, and the extent of his erudition truly wonderful : hence, both friends and foes have combined in weaving wreaths of laurel to grace his memory. Even Bale, the apostate Carmelite and avowed enemy of monks, could not refuse to this venerable monk, the well earned tribute of admiration. He surpassed, Bale owns, in eloquence and copiousness of style even Gregory the Great ; and would have been a competitor had he been a contemporary with Augustine, Jerome, or Chrysostom. Hardly, he adds, in all antiquity is there



anything worthy of perusal which may not be found in the writings of Bede. Dr. John Pitts declares that Europe scarce ever produced a greater scholar ; and informs us that his works, even before his death, were by a council appointed to be read publicly in the churches.* It is amazing, exclaims Folchard, the learned abbot of Thorney, how this great man became so perfect in every branch of science to which he turned his attention.

* The works here alluded to are Bede's Homilies and Sermons, of which several were admitted into the canonical service of the church whilst their author was still living.

From this circumstance, Trithemius has endeavoured to account for his being usually styled Venerable, and not St. Bede. As he says a living author could not in strict propriety be called saint, when the Homilies were publicly read, they were announced as the writings of Venerable Bede ; by which epithet he henceforth continued to be designated ; though enrolled after his death in the calendar of saints.

But the learned Mabillon has proved that the conjectures of Trithemius are entirely groundless.

In the first place, because it was not customary, in the days of Bede, to announce the names of their respective authors when Homilies were recited in the church. For the first instance known of a Book of Lessons, bearing the names of their authors prefixed to them, was that of Paul of Warnefrid, published by order of Charlemagne.

Secondly, because all the more ancient manuscripts give to the Homilies in question, not the title of Venerable, but of Presbyter or Dominus Bede.

If, in confirmation of these remarks, more authorities were requisite, a prolix enumeration of further testimonials might easily be adduced. But we will pass them over in silence as superfluous commendations. For the numerous and learned productions of Bede, concerning which we shall soon have occasion to speak, are alone sufficient to evince his uncommon industry, and to establish his reputation. We will therefore return to our narrative.

At the age of nineteen our youth was presented by Ceolfrid, his abbot, to Deacon's orders. This early promotion to the dignity and sacred functions of the ministry, reflects on the character of Bede the brightest lustre. For in the rigid discipline of primitive times, nothing but the most evident proofs of consummate piety, could have procured, in his behalf, such a deviation from Ecclesiastical ordinances, as was requisite for his advancement to the Hierarchy at so early a period. Nor would the experienced guides by

Lastly, because the writers who notice him prior to the ninth century, style him saint. Thus he was styled by the prelates of the Franks in the Council of Aix la Chapelle, by Hincmar, Bishop of Rheims, and by Notker in his Martyrology.

The title, therefore, of Venerable does not appear to have been generally given to our saint, till the ninth century, and then to have been adopted by Amalarius, Jonas, Usuard, and others, solely for the purpose of expressing a peculiar respect to his memory.

whom he was conducted, have ventured to confer on him this flattering distinction at an age so liable to be injured by vanity, had not his virtues been truly illustrious, and his known modesty a firm protection to his virtues.

In pourtraying the excellent characters of the abbots of his own monastery, Bede has observed, "that neither their rank in the world, nor their promotion in the order, ever infected their hearts with the least tincture of vanity or pride. But that however elevated their station, they continued to be the same humble individuals, affable and kind to their inferiors, and on every convenient occasion ready to join them in the performance even of the most servile offices." Of this amiable christian spirit, and of these edifying labours, for which his directors were so conspicuous, we can have no doubt but our youth, who enjoyed their fullest approbation, must have possessed an ample portion. Like themselves, he must have been a perfect model of charity, industry, patience and obedience, or no abilities would have secured him their favour. His chief employment, however, in addition to assiduous prayer and meditation, appears to have been the prosecution of his studies, and the copying of manuscripts, till he attained his thirtieth year, at which period he was raised to the dignity of the priesthood.

As at this juncture there was no episcopal See at Durham, Bede received his ordination from the hands of John of Beverley, Bishop of Halgutstad, or Hexham, within the limits of whose district Jarrow was situated. To the same eminent prelate he was also indebted, according to several ancient writers, for a part of his education. For among his preceptors they number the learned and pious John of Beverley. This assertion, however, seems to depend rather on conjecture, than historical evidence; and may, indeed, be a mistake occasioned by the circumstance of Bede having studied sacred music under John, Abbot of St. Martin's. That his thirst for knowledge would impel the eager youth to consult all the ablest teachers of the age, to whom he could gain access, we have every reason to suppose: and that in his theological researches he enjoyed the aid of several professors, we learn from himself. For in his Ecclesiastical History, he names as one, amongst many, who instructed him in the Scriptures, the celebrated Trumbert, who was in his time a monk of Jarrow, but had formerly been a disciple of St. Chad, Bishop of Lichfield. From the encomiums he bestows in the same work on Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his companion the Abbot Adrian, for their ability in teaching the

learned languages, it is highly probable he derived either from them, or from some of their immediate disciples, his knowledge of Greek and Latin, together with a taste for composition.

But whoever had the honour of assisting our youth in his early pursuits, must have rejoiced to behold the success which crowned their labours; and could not but experience a secret delight, in devoting their hours to the care of a pupil, whose ardent and comprehensive mind readily embraced every science which was then studied, and raised him to a high pre-eminence above all his contemporaries.

Yet notwithstanding his superior endowments, had he been suffered to listen to the dictates of his own modesty, his name would probably have been lost in oblivion, and succeeding ages deprived of his labours. But urged by the importunity of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, and the injunctions of his superiors, he was compelled soon after he received the priesthood to display his talents in writing for the public. As an author his fame was soon established, and, according to Malmsbury, so extensively diffused, that the majesty of Rome, at that period the seat of learning, solicited his assistance in solv-

ing abstruse questions.* All the western world, the same historian adds, yielded the palm to his

* Malmsbury tells us it was currently reported in his time, that Bede had actually gone to Rome for the purpose either of personally asserting that his writings were consistent with the doctrines of the church, or if found erroneous, of correcting them by apostolical authority. That he was at Rome, I do not, however, add the same historian, affirm as an absolute fact ; but I have no doubt in declaring that he had been invited thither, and that the See of Rome so highly esteemed him, as greatly to desire his presence. In proof of this assertion he adduces the following epistle, supposed to have been written by the Pontiff Sergius.

“Sergius the Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to Ceolfrid, the holy Abbot, sendeth greeting.

“With what words, and in what manner, can we declare the kindness and unspeakable Providence of our God, and return fit thanks for his boundless benefits, who leads us when placed in darkness and the shadow of death, to the light of knowledge?” And below, “Know that we received the favour of the offering which your devout piety hath sent, by the present bearer, with the same joy and good-will with which it was transmitted. Assenting, therefore, to the timely and becoming prayer of your laudable anxiety, with deepest regard, we request of your pious goodness so acceptable to God (that since there have occurred certain points of Ecclesiastical Discipline, not to be promulgated without further examination, which have made it necessary for us to confer with persons skilled in literature, as becomes an assistant of the holy universal mother church, devoted to God), not to delay paying ready obedience to this our admonition, but to send without any loss of time to our lowly presence, at the church of the chief apostles Peter and Paul, your friends and protectors, that religious servant of God, Bede, priest of your venerable monastery, whom (God favouring your holy prayers) the necessary discussion of the above mentioned points being, by the assistance of God, solemnly completed, you may expect shortly to return prosperously to you ; for whatever may be added to the

faith and authority ; for, indeed, he was of sound faith, and of artless, yet pleasing eloquence, in all elucidations of the scriptures, discussing those points from which the reader might imbibe the love of God and his neighbour, rather than those which might charm by their wit, or polish a rugged style.

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church at large by his assistance, will, we trust, be profitable to the things committed to your immediate care."

If this epistle be genuine, for some reason now unknown, Bede must have declined accepting the invitation it contains ; for he expressly states at the end of his Ecclesiastical History, that the whole time from his childhood to the fifty-ninth year of his age, was devoted in his monastery to the study of the scripture, the observance of his rule, and the delightful task of improving himself and others. From this passage it is manifest that Bede had then performed no distant journey. But whether in giving an account of himself, his modesty suppressed the honourable circumstance of receiving an invitation to visit the Holy See, or the epistle itself be fictitious, cannot now be decided.

There are some grounds to suspect the latter, for Sergius died in seven hundred and one, and Bede was not raised to the priesthood till the year seven hundred and two. If no error has occurred in these dates (and by the learned they are deemed correct) the whole story would appear but a baseless fabric. If the dates be erroneous, and the epistle were really written, the departure of Bede was probably prevented by the death of Sergius, which must have occurred either before, or very soon after the arrival of his letter in England. *Vide* Smith's Bede, p. 797, and 799.

In a very ancient manuscript of this epistle in the Cottonian Library, written in Saxon character, the title of Presbyter is not given to Bede. This, if the epistle be genuine, is a more correct copy than that preserved by Malmsbury.

Usher.

These commentaries, with an extensive variety of homilies or sermons, comprise the theological labours, and a large portion of Bede's numerous productions. Had his fertile pen furnished the world with no further testimonies of his industry, these alone would have abundantly sufficed, to immortalize his diligence. For there is scarce a book in either the old or the new Testament, which he has not illustrated with elaborate and diffusive comments. But a scrupulous and commendable regard to the authority of the most ancient christian writers, restrained him in his scriptural explanations from aiming at novelty, or aspiring to the fame of original discovery. Content to shine in the track marked out by his predecessors in the faith once delivered to the saints,* he has in general done little more than expiate on the sentiments of prior commentators. This he notices himself, as a commendation to his writings, in the compendium he has given of his own life, at the close of his Ecclesiastical History.

“From the time of receiving the priesthood, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have been employed for the benefit of myself or of my friends, in making these extracts from the works

* Ep. St. Jude i. 3.

of the Venerable Fathers, or in making additions according to their sense of interpretation." Then enumerating thirty-six volumes which he published in seventy-eight books, he proceeds, "And I pray earnestly, O merciful Jesus, that Thou wouldst grant me, to whom Thou hast given the knowledge of Thyself, finally to come to Thee, the fountain of all wisdom, and to appear for ever in Thy presence.

Moreover, I humbly entreat all persons whether readers or hearers, whom my works shall reach, that they be mindful to intercede with the divine clemency for my infirmities both of mind and body, and that in their several provinces they make me this grateful return, that I who have laboured to record whatever seemed worthy of preservation, or agreeable to the Inhabitants, may receive from all the benefit of their pious intercessions."

Here, exclaims the learned Malmsbury, who has recorded in his Book of Kings this passage, here my abilities fail, here my eloquence falls short; ignorant which to praise most, the number of his writings, or the gravity of his style. No doubt he had imbibed a large portion of

heavenly wisdom, to compose so many volumes within the limits of so short a life.*

Besides commentaries on the Scripture and sermons, the active pen of Bede supplied a great variety of other compositions, both in poesy and prose. These with the exception of a book of hymns and a collection of epigrams, are for the most part still extant, and consist of biographical notices of the Abbots of Wearmouth, and of several other eminent persons, of chronological and geographical tracts, and of elementary introductions to the numerous topics, which form the circle of the sciences.

To discuss with accuracy and minuteness the nature of these multifarious productions, would far exceed the limits of our present undertaking ; we will therefore briefly remark on the 'philosophical works of our venerable author, that in

* Ancient authors have undoubtedly spoken in higher strains of Bede's scriptural expositions and theological lucubrations, than was to be expected from modern writers. His merit, however, is still acknowledged to be great, and his praise continues even to the present day to be re-echoed by critics of every country, interest, and religion. "The learning of Bede," says Turner, in his *Anglo-saxon Antiquities*, page 432, "considered with respect to the period in which he lived, deserves our highest admiration. His reading was multifarious, and whatever he read, he appropriated. His commentaries on the scripture evince much reading and plain sense,"

developing the mysteries of nature, his industry was crowned with much less success, than has rewarded the labours of many since his day, whose abilities and application were incomparably inferior; but who were assisted in their researches by the progressive improvements of succeeding years. Hence the superiority of more modern naturalists, ought not to derogate from the honours due to Bede. For as a philosopher he was in his day great, and would have been proportionably great, had he lived in any other. "Whoever," Mr. Lingard justly observes, "reads the treatise of Bede, *de ratione temporum*, in which he explains the nature of the Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, and Saxon years, must view with astonishment the deep and extensive erudition of a monk, who had never passed the limits of his native province, but spent the whole of his days among the half civilized inhabitants of Northumbria."

'In biographical and historical compositions Bede's labours were more happily employed; for in each of these he has left monuments of unfading excellence and value. Of the former, the reader may collect some specimens in the following small translation; which though unequal to the original in simplicity and energy of style, may suffice to show that its author was no

mean adept either in discerning and delineating with a delicate pencil the nicest shades of character, or in making his descriptions glow with warm and pathetic language. These happy talents for biography he also exercised in writing the life of St. Cuthbert, which he composed both in verse and prose, and in translating that of St. Felix into prose from the poems of Paulinus. By a fate which ordinarily pursues writers of celebrity, numerous productions of the same kind, but which derive their origin from the pens of inferior authors, were attributed to him, and are now published in his works: such are the lives of St. Columba, Attalus, Eustatius, Bertulfus, and Fara, originally written by Jonas, a disciple of the first mentioned. Such, also, is the life of Gregory the Great, composed by Paul, the deacon; to which may be added those of St. Patrick, and Vedastus; the former of which was the work of Probus, the latter of an anonymus Frenchman.

○ In this enumeration we ought not to pass over without distinguished notice the Ecclesiastical History of the Anglo-Saxons. For of the many literary performances which immortalize the name and memory of Bede, the most celebrated and at the same time the most interesting, is his faithful history of the Anglo-Saxon church.

This valuable work was begun at the suggestion of Albin, a learned disciple of Archbishop Theodore and Abbot Adrian ; and was not completed till two or three years before the death of its venerable author. Albin, who had suggested the idea, willingly lent him every assistance he could afford towards the execution of the arduous undertaking. With patient ardour he perused the numerous records deposited at Canterbury, solicitously enquired for information of the neighbouring elders, and dispatched Nothelm to Rome in search of Saxon memorials. By these active exertions, Albin had the good fortune to procure not only what his own province and the metropolitan See of Britain could contribute to the enlargement and authority of his friend's lucubrations, but also a variety of letters from the archives of the apostolic See, essentially requisite to perfect the work, which he had prevailed upon him to undertake. The universal esteem and admiration in which Bede was held, excited in his favour a similar ardour throughout the other provinces of the kingdom. From every quarter communications were addressed to him by the different prelates, containing all the information relative to the subject he was treating, which they could each acquire within the limits of their respective districts. He has

gratefully preserved in his preface the names of the persons to whom he was thus indebted, for the copious sources from which he drew his history. In describing the first establishment and early progress of religion in the northern districts, he had the authority of numberless vouchers; the latter transactions he wrote from his own personal knowledge of events. With these advantages he also possessed that first and most essential quality of an historian, an ardent love of truth.

Thus provided with every requisite, Bede enters on the arduous task of recording the Ecclesiastical affairs of his own nation, from the period in which she first embraced christianity, down to his own times. For several years he laboured in this useful undertaking, with the care and diligence due to its importance. It is not easy, at this day, to form an adequate idea of the pains it must have cost, to compose a regular and well supported narrative of a long series of successive and intricate events, unaided by any preceding historian, and with no other guidance to direct him, but the crude materials which an uncultivated age would present. But every obstacle yielded to the assiduity of Bede. In seven hundred and thirty-one his Ecclesias-

tical History was published, and though the fame of its venerable author had excited great expectations, it surpassed in excellence the most sanguine hopes of his admirers. By his contemporaries, it was everywhere received with applause ; by succeeding generations it was piously preserved as a memorial of the virtue of their ancestors ; and by Alfred the Great it was translated into Saxon, for the instruction of his more illiterate countrymen.

As a faithful record of the era which it describes, its worth to this day is allowed to be inestimable ; its merit also as a literary production has ever been deemed considerable. The style is strong, easy, and perspicuous ; whilst in the arrangement of facts no little ingenuity is exercised. That, however, it falls short of the elegant specimens of learning produced in the Augustan age, cannot be denied ; but if compared with writings of the same period, it will be found entitled to almost unlimited praise. To insist on any other mode of comparison, would be offering an injury to the memory of its author, and violating the rules of equitable criticism. If to some critics the credulity of Bede, with respect to miracles, of which he has deemed several worthy of historical preservation, appear a blemish, his candour at least, his

sincerity, and his piety, must please and edify every reader.*

Approaching to the conclusion of his historical labours, Bede gives a lively and interesting description of the flourishing condition of his country. It enjoyed, he remarks, at that mo-

* Some biographers and critics have censured our venerable historian for not being more explicit in his dates and details of civil transactions; others arraign him of partiality to his own nation for touching so lightly on the ecclesiastical affairs of the Britons, whilst he is so prolix in his narratives concerning the Anglo-Saxon church.

As Bede is the only author who rescued from the canker of oblivion the period of which he wrote, it is indeed to be wished that he had left nothing material unrecorded. But to blame a writer who did so much, for not doing everything, is shewing but little justice to his memory. Neither does it seem equitable, to consider the deficiencies complained of, as omissions in the work of Bede. For the subjects on which they are said to occur came not within the range of his plan. He did not undertake to compose a Civil, but an Ecclesiastical History, and that not of the Britons, but of the Anglo-Saxons.

The best editions of this History are those of Abr. Wheloc, with notes, at Cambridge, in 1644; of Peter Fran. Chifflet, with notes, at Paris, in 1681; and especially of Dr. John Smith, at Cambridge, in 1722, in folio, with Bede's other historical works, viz. his Chronicle, or a Treatise on the Six Ages of the World; his Lives of St. Cuthbert and Felix; his Letter to Archbishop Egbert; his book on the Holy Places; his Martyrology; and his Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth.

The works of Bede were printed at Paris, in 1499 and in 1545, in three tomes; at Basle in 1563, in eight; and at Cologne in 1612 and in 1688.

ment, universal tranquility ; was supported by the learning, and adorned by the virtues of illustrious prelates. The Picts had not only concluded a treaty of alliance with the Anglo-Saxons, but were also united with them in the peace of the universal church. The Scots had ceased to molest the English, and lived contented within the boundaries of their own territory. The Britons, indeed, still cherished their inveterate hatred to the Saxon race, and with respect to the celebration of Easter, resisted the ordinance of the whole church, but were destitute of power to carry into effect their malevolent designs.

In the centre, however, of this serene and joyful prospect, one scene arose that wore a less gratifying appearance, and created some disturbance in his mind. What that was he does not in his History fully express. But the evil continuing to increase till it assumed a most alarming attitude, he disclosed shortly afterwards the grief and apprehensions of his soul, in an animated epistle addressed to Egbert, Archbishop of York. This was the last of our venerable author's compositions, in the order of time ; but perhaps the first, in doing credit to his eloquence, zeal, penetration, and disinterested virtue.

After stating, in a style truly apostolic, the sublime virtues to which all who are raised to church dignities should aspire, and the vigilance they should exert in repressing disorders and watching over their respective flocks, he vents his indignation in the bitterest terms on the abuses which had impelled him to draw his pen.

These, we find, originated in the admission of improper subjects, who, instead of leading exemplary lives, introduced into the ancient religious establishments scandals and irregularities. But the disorder at which his pious invectives are principally levelled, was the following avaricious and detestable contrivance.

As church possessions were exempt from secular burthens, whilst grants to laymen were encumbered with services or acknowledgments, several of the nobility purely from a love of ease, and a fondness for lucre, procured licences to erect monasteries, which they supplied with their own guards or attendants, with monks decoyed from true monasteries, or with such as had been expelled for misdemeanours. Here they indulged their indolence and luxury, and devoted to religion in nothing but in name, withdrew their possessions from the necessary support of the State, and themselves from the

duties of martial exercise. Upwards of thirty years had this grievance subsisted, and been carried to an alarming extent. On the other hand, the difficulty of redress was much increased by the behaviour of some spiritual lords, who lent their signatures and approbation to these nominal and heterogeneous monasteries.

Bede, however, frankly informs the Archbishop, that the necessity of providing a remedy is manifest, and that the inveterate distemper requires an immediate and powerful application. He exhorts him to a vigorous exertion of his episcopal authority, appeals to his conscience, and reminds him of the obligation he is under of obeying God rather than man.*

Whether this zealous and spirited epistle awakened the attention of his countrymen and was crowned with success, or the abuses continued till swept away by the Danish invasion, is now uncertain. But whatever may have been the effect of Bede's admonitions, the highest

* Several modern writers in describing the Saxon monks, have consulted this invective of Bede, but without discovering, or at least without reporting to their readers, the distinction made in it between real and pretended monasteries; and hence all the vices are unjustly ascribed to the former, with which Bede reproaches only the latter. *Vide* Ling. Anglo-Sax. Church, p. 134.

encomiums were due to the charitable and intrepid zeal with which he struggled to uphold the declining virtues of his own days, and to avert the evils which his penetrating mind perceived impending over the rising generation from that relaxation of morals, to which his thoughtless countrymen, enervated by the sunshine of ease and prosperity, were rapidly yielding.

This eloquent epistle was addressed to Egbert on his elevation to the See of York, an event which did not long precede the death of its venerable author. It was therefore the last token of concern and advice offered to his country by a dying saint, who had devoted to its advancement in piety and knowledge, the whole course of his mortal existence, with an assiduity never perhaps surpassed, and rarely, if ever equalled.

To the justice of this assertion, the numerous treatises of science and instruction already specified, bear ample testimony. For such a series of elaborate compositions is not the result of ordinary efforts, even in writers whom an uninterrupted leisure exempts from every other occupation but the labour of the pen. The achievement therefore of so many admirable monuments of literature, under the circumstances in which Bede wrote, must ever be regarded as a prodigy

of human exertion. It fully justifies the following observation made by an ancient writer: "We cannot contemplate the numerous works of Bede, without wondering how he could find time for his devotions; nor reflect on the exercises of devotion which he daily practised, without being equally at a loss to comprehend how he could find leisure for writing." Nor in writing only did Bede exert his abilities on behalf of others. His high reputation drew to his retreat crowds of visitors and scholars, to whose improvement he cheerfully paid attention. Amongst others Ceolwulph, or Celwulph, king of Northumbria, ("a man," says Malmsbury, "competent in other respects to bear the sceptre, and withal possessed of a depth of literature,") owed much of his proficiency in letters to the constant and familiar intercourse he maintained with Bede. His royal relative, Egbert, Archbishop of York, whom we have already mentioned, was indebted for his education to the same able and indefatigable teacher.

In his own monastery, which contained six hundred members, the assiduous Bede gave daily lectures. Here crowds must have listened to his wisdom, and caught the sacred love of science. The names indeed of several who were



thus favoured have deserved to reach posterity. Huetbert, called also Eusebius, the successor of Ceolfred in the abbacy of Wearmouth, Cuthbert, who after him was raised to the same dignity, and Nothelm, who was promoted, after worthily discharging the functions of Presbyter in London, to the metropolitan See of Canterbury, with others whose names we pass over in silence, had the happiness of being included in the number of Bede's disciples.

To the multiplicity of his labours at Jarrow, this unwearied and venerable professor appears to have added an occasional superintendence over the seminary at York. For in his epistle to Egbert, he notices the circumstance of his having taught there some time, in the course of the preceding year ; and alleges in apology for not returning with the return of the season, his decaying health. In consequence, we presume, of this annual attendance, and because the establishment was under the immediate tuition of his former disciple Egbert, antiquity has enrolled in the list of Bede's pupils several literary characters of eminence, who took their degrees in that flourishing academy. The most illustrious of these, and the only one we shall here notice, was Alcuin, the preceptor of Charlemagne. Yes, it was to the school of Bede that this celebrated

character was principally indebted for his extensive erudition. For, emulous of the virtues and accomplishments of so renowned a master, Alcuin soared high above all his contemporaries in the region of science ; and pursuing the same arduous career as his vigilant instructor, he displayed as great vigour and perseverance in diffusing, as he had exhibited in acquiring the treasures of knowledge.

But the sphere of Alcuin's activity was situated in a foreign realm. Exiled from his native land by the disturbances of the times, or allured and detained abroad by the importuning solicitations of his royal pupil, he made France the seat of his residence, and the theatre of his labours. Here, walking in the footsteps of the immortal Bede, he had the merit of propagating a love of letters from the Gallic Alps to the banks of the Loire, the Rhine, and the Elbe.

But the prosperity which smiled upon his labours, and excited the veneration and gratitude of a foreign court, could not obliterate in the heart of Alcuin the remembrance of his native isle. The frequent epistles he transmitted from abroad, to all who enjoyed any rank at home, either in church or state, are honourable monuments of the zeal with which he

sought to promote her welfare, as well as of the grief with which he lamented her misfortunes. In one of his letters conveyed to Jarrow, he makes an allusion to the venerable man, whose actions we are recording, in so pathetic and elegant a strain, that we trust our readers will not find the whole passage, in which it occurs, either tedious or unseasonably introduced in concluding the life of Bede.

VVV "Think," he says, to the monks, "on the worth of our predecessors, and blush at your own inferiority. View the treasures of your library, and the magnificence of your monastery, and recall to mind the rigid virtues of those by whom they were formerly possessed. Among you was educated Bede, the most illustrious doctor of modern times. How intense was his application to study! How great in return his reputation among men! How much greater still his reward with God! Let his example rouse you from your torpor; listen to the instructions of your teachers; open your books and learn to understand their meaning. Avoid all furtive revellings, and leave to the world the vain ornaments of dress. What becomes you is the modesty of your habit, the sanctity of your life, and the superiority of your virtue."

Such were the maxims of industry, sound piety, and religion ever taught, and constantly practised, during the whole tenour of his existence, by the venerable subject of these pages. In the mind of Alcuin, who had often heard his instructions, and witnessed the splendour of his example, the mere name of Bede was deemed a pressing exhortation to holiness of life. With the recollection of him was associated the idea of every perfection placed within the reach of a human being, who has consecrated all the powers of soul and body to the cultivation of pure and exalted virtue. Nor does this high estimation in which his revered character was held by Alcuin, and by all who had seen his excellence, appear to surpass the tribute due to so holy and venerable a man. For his life was blameless, his manners holy, his labours incessant, his piety most fervent, his abilities rare, and his modesty still rarer.

A life, such as we have here had to describe, wholly devoted to the prosecution of study and the practice of virtue, and adorned, in every stage from the cradle to the grave, with an unspotted sanctity and holy purity of heart, could not fail to be recompensed with a happy and glorious exit. For blessed is the servant who hath persevered in the narrow path of right-

eousness to the hour of his visitation, and who, when his Lord cometh, is found vigilant and faithful in the discharge of all his duties. Far from dreading, he joyfully hails the day of dissolution as the term of his labours, the conclusion of his conflict, the date of his victory, the consummation of his wishes, the end of mourning and sorrow, and the commencement of heavenly repose and uninterrupted enjoyment. It was in this happy manner our venerable saint closed his mortal career. Having ever lived as he longed to die, his pure soul departed hence in peace, clothed in the bright robe of undefiled integrity, and vigorous under the pressure of corporeal infirmities, in the spiritual exercises of gratitude and divine praise.

The particulars of his holy departure were accurately noticed by his disciple Cuthbert, who attended him during his last illness, and transmitted an account of his death, in a long epistle addressed to Cuthwin, one of his former companions. The whole of this faithful portrait of a dying saint would be too large for insertion in this work. We will therefore present only its leading outlines to the reader.

About a fortnight before Easter, the holy man was troubled with such a difficulty of breathing, that his disorder, though void of pain, confined

him to his bed ; and to this complaint soon succeeded such an excessive debility of stomach, that he nauseated all food. Yet he neither omitted his wonted exercises of devotion, nor abandoned his literary avocations. On the contrary, in the same proportion as his strength of body decayed, his mind seemed to acquire new energy and vigour. By day and by night, he every hour poured forth his soul in acts of the most tender piety and thanksgiving to the Lord. During the day also, in addition to his accustomed tasks of psalmody, he gave lectures to his pupils, striving to mitigate and forget his sufferings, by turning his whole attention to the investigation of truth. And no sooner had his disciples withdrawn, and left him to the solitude of night, than his soul was wholly absorbed in heavenly contemplation and canticles of divine praise. If at any time a short slumber stole upon his eyes, immediately awaking and repelling it, he renewed, with uplifted hands, his pious accents of gratitude to heaven, and shewed that his affections were ever intent on God.

“Never, never,” exclaims his astonished disciple, “did I witness such ardent and uninterrupted ecstasies of sacred rapture and joy. O happy man ! who could in death repeat with a

quiet conscience that awful sentence of St. Paul,* 'It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;' or with an expiring Ambrose could say, 'I have not passed my life among you so as to be ashamed to live, neither do I fear to die, for we have a kind master.'"

Frequently too, adds Cuthbert, he would warn his disciples in many appropriate citations from Scripture, to shake off all torpor of spirit, by serious reflections on the certainty of death. Occasionally also, as his memory was well stored with English poems, he would exhort us in our own language vigilantly to guard ourselves against a sudden and unexpected departure, by reciting to us verses of the following import. No one ever too cautiously weighed, before the hour of unavoidable dissolution arrived, the good or evil he had done, and the account he had to render, when placed before the awful tribunal of the supreme Judge of the living and the dead.

At other times he invited the grace of the Holy Spirit, saying, "O King of glory, Lord of virtue, Who ascendest this day triumphant into the heavens, leave us not orphans, but send upon us the promise of the Father, the Spirit

* Heb. x. 31.

of Truth." Floods of tears often accompanied these tender ejaculations, and excited the sympathy of all present. Upon which the holy man, with pious resignation, would observe, "That the Lord chastiseth those whom he loves; but that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the future glory that shall be revealed in us."*

Thus were passed the fifty days preceding the festival of the Ascension, our hours being divided in alternately weeping, and alternately reading with our beloved master. In the meanwhile, he himself, besides giving daily lectures, and performing his exercises of psalmody, was deeply engaged in two literary productions, highly worthy of notice.

The first was a translation of the Gospel of St. John, into the Anglo-Saxon language. In this work, which he happily carried to the following sentence of the sixth chapter, "what are these among so many," he had in view the utility of the Church in general; in the other, which consisted of annotations on some extracts from Bishop Isidore, he sought the advantage of his disciples in particular; anxious that they should not labour unprofitably after his depart-

* Hebrews, xii. 6, and Rom. viii. 12.

ure, by reading what had been incorrectly written.

On the Tuesday before our Lord's Ascension, his disease rapidly increasing, there appeared a small swelling in his feet, the sure and certain indication of approaching death. He continued, however, the whole of that day to dictate to his scholars, with his wonted alacrity ; and not unfrequently urging them to write with speed, amongst other things, he said, " Learn, my children, while I am with you ; for I know not how long I shall continue, and whether my Maker will not shortly take me hence." The night he passed awake in devout acts of prayer and thanksgiving. Early on Wednesday morning, he again pressed us to write with haste, and complete the work we had begun. This we diligently did, till the hour for procession : after which, one of us observed, " Dear master, there is still a chapter wanting, is it troublesome to you to answer any more questions?" " It is," he replied, " no trouble ; take your pens, and note down with celerity what remains unfinished."

About three o'clock in the afternoon, he requested us to invite to his apartment, without delay, all the priests of the monastery. As soon as they arrived, he distributed amongst them

several small presents,* which he had privately reserved for the occasion ; and then addressing himself to each, he earnestly conjured them to celebrate masses for him, and to remember him in their prayers. This done, he informed them, that in this life they would never behold him more ; at which words the whole assembly burst into tears. But their minds were speedily consoled by the pious reflections which he made.

“ It is now time,” he said, “ for my spirit to return to Him, who out of nothing gave it existence. I have lived long ; God hath rightly appointed the portion of my days. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Yes, my soul pants to be delivered from the frail prison of this body, and to behold my Saviour face to face, in the bright realms of immortal splendour and incorruptible glory.”

In this edifying and sublime strain he continued to discourse till evening. One of his disciples then said, “ Dear master, one sentence is not yet written.” “ Then write it quickly,” he replied. Soon after the young man said it was

* The tokens of regard, which Bede presented to his colleagues, were little cloths, or handkerchiefs, a few pepper-corns, and grains of frankincense ; articles of much greater rarity and value in that age, than at present.

finished. "Truly," exclaimed the dying saint, "it is finished. Hold my head in thy hands, for it is a pleasure to me to sit opposite the holy place in which I have been accustomed to pray. There let me invoke my Father." He was placed on the pavement of his cell, repeated the *Gloria Patri*, and expired.*

Thus died, or rather was translated into the joy of his Lord, the devout Bede, the pride of his age, the glory of his country, and the most brilliant star which ever arose in the Anglo-Saxon church.

On Wednesday the 26th of May, soon after the first Vespers of the Ascension, in the year of the Lord seven hundred and thirty-five, his blessed spirit departed hence, to the eternal peace and immortal honours of the righteous.†

* Malsbury, in his description of Bede's departure, says "That on the Tuesday before our Lord's Ascension, the congregation being called together, he was annointed and received the sacrament." The same circumstance, probably on his authority, has been noticed by Ranulph Higden, a learned antiquary of the fourteenth century.

† According to the ordinary system of computation, Bede's death took place on the Vigil, though dated by all ancient writers on the festival of the Ascension, because he did not expire till after Evening Song of the day preceding that solemnity. This was styled the first Vespers, and in the ecclesiastical way of reckoning is the commencement of the holy day.

His mortal remains were interred in St. Paul's church at Jarrow, where a porch on the north side bore his name. In the year 1020 they were

But concerning the year of his decease and his age, historians differ. Simeon of Durham, speaking of his education, places his birth in 677; and Book II. Ch. 14, de Ecclesia. Dunelmensi, the same writer records his death on the festival of the Ascension, the 26th of May, in the year 735, and the 59th of his age.

This statement, however, though given by a writer whose authority is great, and who lived nearest the times of Bede, we know, on the testimony of Bede himself, cannot be strictly accurate. For he himself tells us, that he had reached his 59th year when he completed his History of the Anglo-Saxon Church; and this must have happened, as both his own declaration and the conclusion of the work itself clearly indicate, in the year 731. And as at this period he had arrived at his 59th year, he must have been born in 673, four years earlier than is stated by Simeon of Durham.

That he lived some time after the publication of his History, is evinced by his epistle to Archbishop Egbert; which was written two years later. And as it is agreed that he died on the 26th of May, and the festival of the Ascension, we may without fear of mistake conclude, that our venerable saint did not quit this mortal state, to enjoy the fruits of his labours, till the year 735, and the 63rd of his age: for the solemnity so often above mentioned, fell out that year on the 26th of May.

This account, which appears to be founded on correct data, shews how widely authors have erred on this more curious than important subject, or how carelessly copyists have transcribed their works, who run up the age of Bede to ninety or a hundred years.

It points out also an inaccuracy of dates in a tablet, formerly suspended on the wall near the tomb of Bede in Durham cathedral; a literal translation of which is here subjoined.

Vide Smith's Bede, p. 715 & 804.

translated to Durham, and, enclosed in a bag and wooden trunk, were deposited in the same shrine with the body of St. Cuthbert. In 1155, they were removed thence, by Bishop Hugh, to a separate shrine of curious workmanship, and richly adorned, in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, at the west end of Durham cathedral.

In this chapel there is still a marble monument, said to be the tomb of Bede. Near it formerly hung a tablet, on which was inscribed in Latin, an epitome of Bede's life. Dr. Smith, the learned editor of Bede's Historical Works, has published at the end of the volume this inscription, accompanied with an engraving of the monument as it stood in his time.

A correct copy of this engraving, taken on a smaller scale, for which we are indebted to the kindness of a friend, is here presented to the reader, together with a translation of the tablet.

Inscription of a Tablet,

Affixed to the Wall near the tomb of Bede, in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, at the West End of Durham Cathedral.

BEDE,

A Servant and Priest of God,

Not less venerable for his sanctity than for his science,
here lies interred.

He was born within the domain of the monastery of Girwy, now Jarrow,
And at the age of seven years, committed to the holy Abbot Benedict,

And afterwards to Ceolfrid, to be educated.

Thenceforth, passing the whole time of his life in residence at the said monastery,

He devoted all his attention to the study of the Scriptures.

And amid the observance of regular discipline, and the daily duty of singing in the church,

He was ever wont

To learn, to teach, or to write.

In his 19th year, he took Deacon's, in his 39th, Priest's orders,
Both by the ministry of John of Beverley, Archbishop of York.

His worth surpassed all praise.

The learned men of those times have recorded of him the following eulogies ;

That he was able, though born in a remote corner of the earth,

To excel the whole world by his extraordinary talents ;

For his mind penetrated the deep mysteries of almost all the sciences, and universal theology,

As his voluminous writings known all over Christendom amply testify.

And so great was the fame and authority of his works,

That many of his homilies, whilst he was living, were added to the lessons,

And publicly recited in the solemn service of the church.

It is known also, that he had illustrious disciples, soon afterwards bright luminaries of the church,

Alcuin, the Preceptor of Charlemagne, and Claudius, and Clement,

The first who taught letters at Paris, and diffused the light of knowledge over Gaul.

He died on the festival of the ascension, A.D. DCCCXXIV. Ætat LIX.

And was buried in the monastery of Jarrow.

His remains were afterwards translated to Durham,

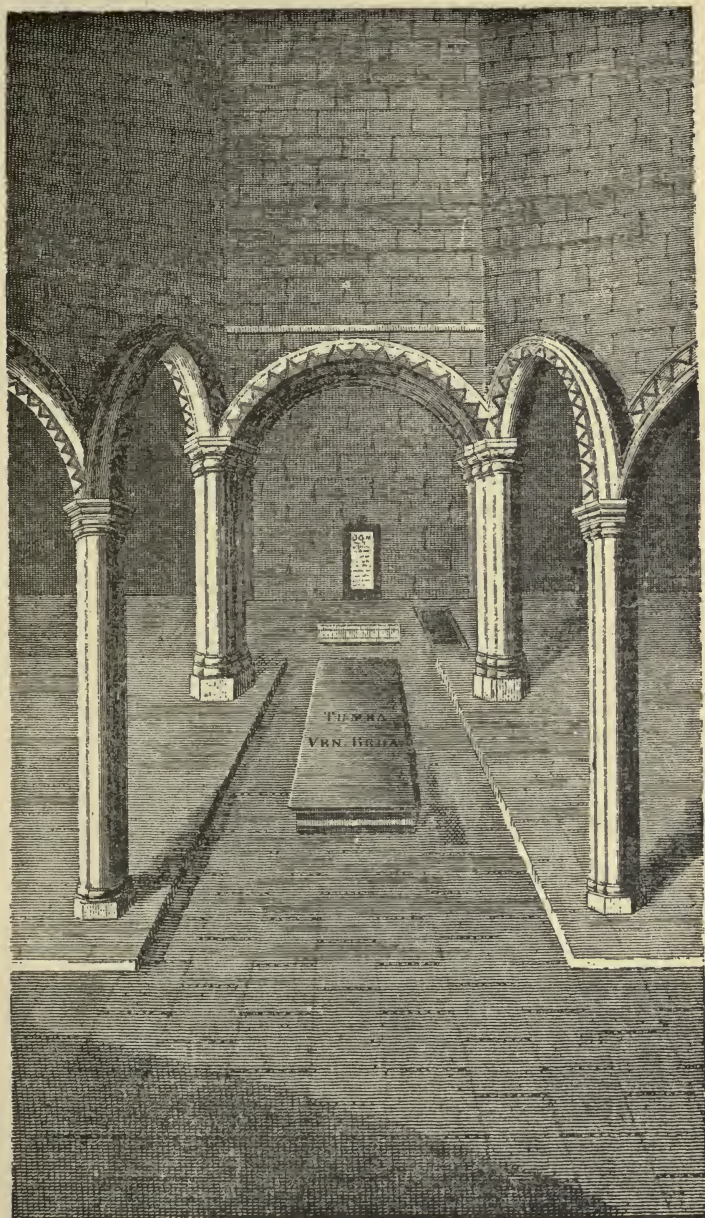
And at first deposited with the head of King Oswald, and the body of St. Cuthbert :

They were next removed to this Monument, erected by Bishop Hugh.

EPITAPH.

In this tomb are the remains of Venerable Bede.





J. Walker Sculp.

The Monument of S^t. Bede, in Durham Cathedral



THE LIVES OF
BENEDICT, CEOLFRID, EOSTERWINE,
SIGFRID, & HUETBERT.

THE religious servant of Christ, Benedict, or Bennet, surnamed Biscop,* founded a monastery† in honour of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, on the north bank and at the mouth of the River Wear. To accomplish this undertaking he received a donation of land, with the patronage and concurrence of the pious and venerable Egfrid, King of the Northumbrians. Nor were the zeal, piety, and unceasing diligence of this incomparable man, more conspicuous in founding, than in afterwards governing the said monastery. For he conducted its administration sixteen years, notwithstanding the innumerable troubles which during that period he encounter-

* Eddius Step. in his *Life of St. Wilfrid*, to Biscop adds Baducing as the surname of Benedict.

† Wearmouth and Jarrow monasteries were the most ancient of any within the limits of the County of Durham.

ed, in the toil and hardships of long and frequent journeys, succeeded by the heavy afflictions of a lingering distemper. With justice, therefore, we may venture to assert (borrowing the expression applied by Gregory the Great* to another abbot of the same name), "that our founder was a man of most venerable character, and Benedict, or 'blessed by grace' as well as name." For from his earliest youth he possessed the prudent sedateness of advanced years; and such even then was the severity of his morals, that his heart never knew the gratification of worldly pleasure.

This excellent youth was the descendant of a noble family of Angles. He also enjoyed the honour of being minister to King Oswy, or Oswiu; and by the bounty of his royal patron, was provided with estates in land proportionate to the dignity of his rank. At the age of twenty-five, however, he cheerfully bade adieu to temporal, that he might ensure eternal possessions; and joyfully retired from the flattering prospects presented to his view by an earthly service, of which the highest rewards are but corruptible, that by consecrating himself to the service of the true King, he might inherit in the regions

* Lib. 2. Dial. cap. 1.

above a crown of incorruptible felicity. For the sake of Christ Jesus and his Holy Gospel Benedict abandoned his home, his kindred, and his country, that, according to divine promise* he might hereafter receive an hundredfold in the enjoyment of life everlasting. To the pleasures of earthly marriage he preferred the future happiness of following the Lamb of unspotted virginity in the kingdom of heaven ;† and renounced the sensual gratification of propagating a mortal posterity in this world, having been called by Christ to raise, through the seed of his divine word, an immortal progeny to celestial bliss in the world to come. Such were the pious dispositions of soul with which Benedict was inspired when he repaired to Rome,§ there to behold and venerate in person the sacred remains of the Apostles, for whose memory he had ever cherished, in spirit, a most ardent affection. He soon afterwards returned home, and never ceased to love, and practise himself, nor to recommend to others, the various institutes of ecclesiastical discipline, with which during his absence he had enriched his mind.

* Matth. xix. 29 † Rev. xiv. 4.

§ Benedict was accompanied in this journey by Wilfrid, afterwards Bishop of York. Bede v. 19. This first pilgrimage appears to have been made about the year 653.

About this time Alfrid, the son of King Oswy (whom we have above mentioned) likewise conceived a design of making a journey of devotion to the capital of the Christian world. Full of this project, the young Prince had already engaged Bennet to be the companion of his travels. But Oswy discountenanced his son's intention, and prohibited his departure to foreign realms. But Benedict, being a youth of noble soul, persevered in accomplishing the projected journey, and again hastened to the Vatican* in the time of the Pontiff Vitalian, whose name occurs in a preceding work.

Having in this, as in his former visit to the seat of the Apostles, imbibed a strong relish for the science of salvation, our devout youth, after a few months' stay, withdrew to the Isle of Lerines,† and was received into its celebrated monastery. Here he took the clerical tonsure, was admitted to his vows, and practised with becoming fervour the rigid virtues, and austere exercises of the cloister. With the sequestered inhabitants of this island he lived in residence two years, during which he acquired a compe-

* A. D. 664.

† A small island on the coast of Provence, now called St. Honore, from St. Honoratus, who founded a monastery there towards the close of the fourth century.

tent knowledge of the monastic institute. At the expiration of this period, again impelled by his active and ever glowing veneration for blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, he determined to undertake a third pilgrimage to the city which was rendered sacred by the precious remains of that great Apostle reposing within its walls. Nor was it long before the arrival of a trading vessel enabled him to execute his design.

At this juncture, Egbert, King of Kent, had despatched to Rome a person of the name of Wighard, duly instructed at Canterbury by the disciples of St. Gregory, in every branch of ecclesiastical knowledge, and recently elected to fill the episcopal chair. This man's consecration the King most anxiously desired, that himself and subjects, having a Prelate of their own nation and language, might be initiated with greater ease and perfection in the doctrines and mysteries of faith. For by the hands and instructions of a relative and countryman, those blessings would be delivered without the perplexity ever attendant on the intervention of interpreters.

Wighard succeeded in the performance of his journey as far as Rome, but during his residence in that city he fell, with all who had accom-

panied him from Britain, a victim to the plague before the ceremony of his consecration was administered. That the faithful, however, might not suffer by this accident, nor the pious object of the legation expire with the expiring legates, Vitalian, who then enjoyed the papal dignity, convened a council, and electing one of his own prelates sent him into Britain, vested with the character of Archbishop, to supply the place of the defunct Wighard.

His choice fell upon Theodore,* a man deeply versed in both sacred and profane science, and

* Theodore was a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, where he had embraced a monastic life. To the severest morals he added a perfect knowledge of ecclesiastical discipline. He took possession of the See of Canterbury in the second year after his consecration, and continued in it twenty-one years. Bede says the Church of England received greater spiritual advantage from his episcopacy than it ever did before from any other Prelate. He died in 690, at the very advanced age of 88 years. Bede's *Eccles. Hist.*, Book v. 8.

Of the prosperity and glory of those days Bede speaks in a style of rapture. Both he (Theodore) and Adrian, he says, were very learned, as well in sacred as in secular literature. Besides expounding the Holy Scriptures they taught poetry, arithmetic, and astronomy, and they taught assiduously the Greek and Latin languages: many of their disciples are still living who can speak both, as well as their native tongue. There never was, he adds, a more happy time than this since the English came to Britain. For England was blessed with the most valiant and truly Christian Kings, the terror of whose arms was felt by all foreign nations. The

well acquainted with the languages of Greece and Rome. To him was associated, in quality of counsellor and colleague, Abbot Adrian, in whom fortitude, vigour of mind and prudence were most signally united. And as Vitalian was well persuaded that our venerable countryman would through life evince industry, wisdom, zeal, and every other noble qualification of soul, he recommended the recently ordained Bishop with his whole retinue to Benedict's care, enjoining him to quit the peregrination which for the love of Christ he had undertaken ; to return, for the purpose of promoting more advantageous objects, to his native country, and to conduct thither a teacher of divine truth whom she had earnestly solicited, and whom it would be in his power to serve under the double capacity of a guide in his travels, and of an interpreter in the discharge of his pastoral functions. The injunctions of the Pontiff are obeyed. They arrive at Canterbury, where they are most gratefully received. Theodore takes possession of his See, and Bennet assumes the government of St. Peter's Abbey. This dignity he resigned two years afterwards into the hands of Adrian,

minds of all were entirely occupied on what they had lately heard concerning the joys of the Kingdom of Heaven ; and if any desired to be instructed in reading the Holy Scriptures, he could always find masters ready to teach him. Bede, *ibid*, Book iv. 2.

whom we have above noticed, and undertook a fourth journey to Rome.* He was accompanied by his usual prosperity, and returned home with an ample collection of books on various subjects of divine literature; this collection he made during his tour, partly by purchase and partly by the gratuitous donations of his acquaintances. Many of his purchases, which he had committed to the care of friends, were safely delivered to him on his return to Vienna.

On regaining his native shore Benedict at first resolved to present himself to Kenwalch, King of the West Saxons, numerous proofs of whose intimacy and benevolent assistance he had on former occasions experienced. But learning soon after he landed that this monarch had perished by a premature death, he turned his steps to the realm and place of his nativity. On his arrival there he addressed himself to Egfrid, King of Northumbria. To this prince he unfolds the various scenes and transactions through which he had passed, from his early youth when he first left his native realm to the

* Bede calls this journey the third, as it was only the third time Benedict had taken his departure from Britain. But as on the second occasion he went twice to Rome, once from Britain and once from Lerines, it was, in all, his fourth pilgrimage to that city. —Mabillonius. This was performed about the year 671.

present hour ; he discovers the ardent desire with which his bosom had ever been inflamed, for the profession of a religious and monastic life ; he recounts, the innumerable researches which he had made and the infinite pains he had taken, both at Rome and in many other places, to perfect himself in the science of ecclesiastical and monastical discipline ; finally, he declares the valuable store of sacred volumes and the number of precious relics of the Apostles and martyrs of Christ, which in his remote perigrinations he had collected and now conveyed home. Egfrid listened to his discourse with affection and veneration, and moved by the holy man's pious exertions, assigned him seventy hides* of the royal domain, with injunctions to

* A hide, plough, or family of land appear to be used as synonymous terms, importing as much land as one plough or one yoke of oxen could throw up in a year, or as sufficed for the maintenance of one family. It is not easy to ascertain what was its precise extent. Polydore Virgil rates it at twenty, others at thirty, some at forty, and many ancient manuscripts at one hundred and twenty acres.

Of the lands bestowed on the monks, it may here be observed that a considerable portion was originally wild and uncultivated, surrounded by marshes or covered with forests. They preferred such situations for the advantage of retirement and contemplation, and as they were of less value they were more freely bestowed by their benefactors. Several monasteries took their names from their situations, as Atbearwe, "in the forest."—Bede, *Eccles. Hist.* p. 144. Ondyrawda, "in the wood of the Deiri."—*Ibid.* p. 183. Croyland, "boggy land ;" Thorney, "the island of thorns ;" Jarrow or Girvum, "a fen."—Lingard's *Ang.-Sax. Church*, p. 144.

found thereon a monastery dedicated to Peter, the chief of the Apostles. This monastery, as we stated in our introduction, was accordingly built on the north bank and at the mouth of the River Wear, in the year of Our Lord's Incarnation six hundred and seventy-four, and in the fourth year of the reign of King Egfrid.

Scarce had twelve months elapsed from the period of founding this monastery, when the indefatigable Benedict again crossed the ocean, and traversed the provinces of France for workmen to construct for its use after the Roman manner, which he highly admired, a magnificent church of stone. These he found, engaged, and conducted to Britain. And now actuated by that ardent love which ever burnt within his heart for the blessed Apostle, under whose patronage the building was raised, he prosecuted the work with such unremitting diligence, that within the compass of a year after the foundation had been laid, the spacious edifice was roofed and mass celebrated within its walls.

Afterwards, when the building was nearly finished, he sent to France for artificers skilled in making glass, an art to which the inhabitants of Britain were at that time strangers. These also arrived, and not only executed their commis-

sion (the glazing the windows of the porticos and principal parts of the church), but likewise communicate to the natives the mystery of their trade, by which lamps, windows, cups, and an endless variety of useful and ornamental articles are formed, with wonderful beauty and facility.* Lastly, Bennet procured by purchase from abroad, as he could not at home, plate, vestments, and consecrated vessels for the service of the church and the ministry of the altar.

Nor did the enterprising spirit of this lover and promoter of the beauty of God's house rest satisfied even here. For as various particulars highly requisite to the stability and protection, or to the due embellishment of his newly erected temple were still deficient, and not attainable even in the more polished regions of France, our unwearied provider determined, after forming the rules and establishing the discipline of

* From the circumstance of Benedict's having to procure masons and glaziers from abroad, it may be decided that stone buildings and glass windows, if at all known, were very rare at that period in England. It appears, however, there were some prior to his, from a passage in William of Malmesbury's *History of the Kings of England*, lately translated by the Rev. J. Sharp. "Very rarely," he says, "before the time of Benedict were buildings of stone seen in Britain, or did the solar ray cast its light through the transparent glass."—Book I. 3. Wilfrid is said to have glazed York Cathedral in 670, for which the glass must have been imported.

his convent, to make a fifth pilgrimage to Rome.* This determination he soon carried into effect, and with more than ordinary advantage, for the acquisitions obtained in this infinitely surpassed in number and importance all the collections he had made on former occasions.

In the first place he now imported an immense library of books on every branch of learning ; secondly, a copious gift of relics of the apostles and martyrs of Jesus, designed for the benefit not of his own only, but of several other British churches. The third advantage derived from this journey was the institution of the art of singing by notes, of the order of psalmody, and of the Church Service, according to the practice of the Apostolic See.† For our considerate

* Concerning the date of this journey writers disagree. Some place it in the year 676, but Bede in his *Eccl. Hist.* Book IV. 18, expressly mentions that Benedict, on this occasion, was honourably received by Agatho, who was not raised to the Pontificate till 678.

† Concerning the introduction of Church Service, Bede, in the fourth Book, p. 18, of his *Eccl. Hist.* says, "that Abbot John taught the monks the proper mode of singing and reading, and also of writing what was to be observed in the celebration of festivals during the whole course of the year. His instructions were transcribed by many persons, who kept copies of them in other places ; for he not only taught the monks of this monastery, but also those of almost all the monasteries of the country, who either came to hear him or invited him to go to them for that purpose.

founder, anxious to have his rising community well grounded in all the rites of solemn worship, had solicited and obtained Agatho's permission to bring over to Britain John, Abbot of St. Martin's and Precentor of St. Peter's, at Rome. Accordingly the good Abbot now came, and most diligently performed the task to which he was invited ; communicating to such of the monks as applied to ecclesiastical learning* whatever he himself had acquired at Rome respecting the above-named particulars, not only by verbal, but also by written instructions. For he committed to paper and left in manuscript no small portion of his knowledge : a benefac-

* In some monasteries the monks were very numerous. At Winchelcomb [or Winchcomb] they amounted to three hundred (*Monas. Ang.* tom. i. p. 190); at Wearmouth and Jarrow, as will be noticed in the sequel, to six hundred ; and in the houses established by St. Wilfrid to some thousands. It were, however, inaccurate to suppose that all these were withdrawn from the occupations of social life to attend solely to pious exercises. In the most popular monasteries a very small proportion of the members were permitted to study the sciences, or to aspire to holy orders, the greater part (five-sixths according to the monk of Winchelcomb) were employed in the daily occupations of husbandry and the mechanic arts, in which they acquired a much greater proficiency than any of their contemporaries. "In illo magno religiosorum numero, vix fortassis quadraginta aut circiter in sacerdotes aut clericos ordinari cerneret : reliqua vero multitudo heremitarum et laicorum more, diversis artificiiis, et aliis manuum laboribus operam dantes, pro his, quæ in necessariis defuerunt, prout ab antiquo boni fecere monachi, diligenter prospiciebant." Reg. Winchel. in *Monas. Ang.* tom. i. p. 190.—Ling. Notes to *Ang.-Sax. Chur.*

tion which is to this day preserved in our Library as a memorial. The fourth acquisition conveyed on this occasion was a deed of immunity conceded by Agatho, in virtue of which the monastery was declared exempt from all external interference, usurpation, and oppression. This important deed* was procured from the reigning Pontiff, with the advice and consent, and even at the express orders of King Egfrid. The fifth and last of Benedict's present supplies was an extensive and valuable assortment of holy pictures composed of the following pieces:—A representation of the Blessed Mary, Mother of God,† and ever virgin, to which were added portraits of the twelve Apostles. With these‡ Benedict adorns the main roof of St. Peter's Church. On the southern wall he unfolds to view a series of historical paintings selected

* This charter of privilege is mentioned likewise in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, but is not, it is believed, now extant. Gervase of Canterbury says of Benedict, "that returning to Rome, he rendered his monastery absolute and free from all episcopal subjection. *Liberum reddidit et absolutum ab omni Episcopali subjectione.*"

† This mode of expression was adopted to denote and profess the divinity of Christ, of whom the Virgin Mary was mother.

‡ The text has in this place, "ducto a pariete ad parietem tabulato," which would seem to imply that the pictures were affixed to a frame of wood that extended from wall to wall across the church,

from the four Gospels, while on the northern he displays the terrific visions described by St. John in the book of Revelation. By this united and magnificent exhibition of so many religious subjects, the whole interior of the sacred edifice presents to the eye one continued scene of pious instruction, accommodated to the capacities of all who enter, even of the humble and unlettered multitude. For in whatever direction they turn their sight it is instantly struck with the resemblance, either of the amiable countenance of Jesus or of some of His chosen friends. Here the heart of the spectator learns to melt with gratitude at the gracious mystery of human redemption; there his soul is summoned to take a strict survey of his mode of life, having before his eyes in the awful spectacle of the last day, the rigorous scrutiny of divine justice.

So highly was King Egfrid charmed with these numerous instances of Benedict's pious zeal and religious industry, and at the same time so struck with the advantages conferred on his dominions by the appropriation he had bestowed for the erection of a monastery within them, that he resolved to augment his original grant with a fresh donation of forty hides of ground. This addition was accordingly made.

The year following, seventeen monks, with the holy priest Ceolfrit at their head, were transferred from the congregation at Wearmouth to the new possession, on which a suitable convent* had been raised for their reception under the tutelary patronage of the great Apostle St. Paul.

In forming this new establishment, Benedict complied, not so properly with the advice as with the commands of Egfrid, his royal patron.

* This monastery was built at Girwy, or Girvy, now Jarrow, on the summit of an elevated ridge about half a mile south of the River Tyne, and two miles from South Shields. Benedict began in 682, and Ceolfrit completed in 684, its foundation. This is ascertained by an ancient inscription which was formerly on the church wall, and is given by Dugdale in his evidences of the two monasteries. According to him it stood thus :—

“Dedicatio Ecclesiæ S. Pauli VIII Kalend. Maii anno XV.
Egfridi Regis, Ceolfridi Abbatis ejusdem Ecclesiæ Deo auctore
conditoris anno iv.”


But Dr. Pegge, who engraved it in his Sylloge of the remaining authentic descriptions relative to the erection of our English churches, gives the following as a more correct transcript, having an erasure between the third and fourth lines :—

✠ Dedicatio Basilikæ
Sci Pauli VIII kl Mai
Anno XV Egfridi Regis
* * * * *
Ceolfridi abb ejusdem
Q eccles. Do auctore
Conditorie Anno IV.

[This inscription is interpreted on the next page.]

And that a separate settlement* might give rise to no jealousy or disquiet, but that an uninterrupted peace and familiar intercourse might ever flourish between the two houses, he carefully bound them together by the closest ties of friendship and mutual dependence. Such indeed was the intimate connection he established between them, that in their union they resembled the indissoluble compactness of the human frame. As in this the body cannot bear to be severed from the head through which it breaths, nor the head neglect the body without which it cannot itself subsist, so these two monasteries dedicated to the two chief Apostles, were in such a manner

The dedication of the church
 Of St. Paul, on the 9th of the Calends of May,
 In the fifteenth year of King Egfrid,
 * * * * *
 In the fourth year of Ceolfrid,
 By the help of God, founder and
 Abbot of the same church.

The initial character  perhaps stands for Propitietur Christus—may Christ be propitious. In 1783 the church of Jarrow was rebuilt, when this inscription was re-inserted on the Northern wall. Vide Hutchinson's *Hist. Durham*.

Leland, *Collect. Ed.* 1715, vol. I. p. 102, ascribes the foundation of Jarrow entirely to Ceolfrid.

* From being so singularly connected in their early history, these two monasteries are often mentioned by writers in the singular number, under the title of the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul.

cemented into one, that all opportunity was precluded of severing them from each other, or disturbing their amicable conjunction.

Ceolfrid, who, as before remarked, was appointed by Benedict to direct the junior community from the earliest institution of the senior convent, had been the individual companion and active partaker of all his labours. On one occasion Ceolfrid had borne him company to Rome to satiate the longings of his own eager devotion, and to qualify himself in the degrees of learning which his station required. About the time of Ceolfrid's nomination to Jarrow, Eosterwine, Presbyter of St. Peter's monastery, was promoted by our founder to the dignity of Abbot, and associated with himself in the charge of governing the community at Wearmouth. This he did that, in union with a beloved and virtuous fellow labourer he might be enabled to support a burthen which overpowered, whilst alone, his utmost strength. Nor let the reader be surprised that one monastery had two Abbots at the same time, for the adoption of this plan became indispensable in consequence of Bennet's frequent absence from home to transact the business of the institution, his numerous departures across the ocean, and the uncertainty of his return. Neither was it an unprecedented measure.

For on the page of history it stands recorded that the holy Apostle Peter united to himself in the same manner, on account of the pressure of affairs, two episcopal colleagues and coadjutors in carrying on the administration of the church. And further, we are informed by St. Gregory that Benedict the Great appointed over his disciples twelve Abbots at once ; a proceeding which, so far from causing any diminution, contributed greatly to the increase of charity amongst them.

In pursuance of his appointment Eosterwine immediately assumed the government of St. Peter's Abbey, in the ninth year after its foundation, and continued to the hour of his death, which happened four years after his election, faithful and vigilant in the discharge of his stewardship.

This amiable man was born of noble parentage, but allowed not the privilege of birth to infect his heart with the ordinary passions of the great, — vanity, ostentation, pride, and a spirit of disdain for inferiors. On the contrary, greatness of rank as becomes a servant of God, tended only to make this excellent youth the more ardently aspire to real and solid greatness of soul. Hence, though on the father's

side he had the honour of being cousin-german to our founder, yet such was the dignity of their sentiments, and such the mutual contempt in which they both held all worldly dignity, that neither the one on his entrance ever thought of claiming, nor the other on his reception into the convent, of offering the slightest token of distinction in consideration of exalted rank or proximity of kindred. To dwell on a level with the lowest, and to emulate the highest of his associates in the pursuit of virtue and the strict observance of religious duties, was the sole ambition which now fired the breast of the noble Eosterwine. And though, to the obscurity of a cloister he had sacrificed the dazzling honours of a Court,* though for the humble and silent virtues of spiritual warfare he had resigned the noisy fame of the world and the splendour of military renown, yet amidst his secluded companions such was his unassuming modesty, that he would often cheerfully join them in performing the most menial offices. To winnow and thrash the corn, to work in the garden, bake-house, or kitchen, or to assist in any other humble and laborious department, was his delight, as it afforded an occasion of exercising himself in the habits of industry, patience, and obedience.

* King Oswy's.

Nor did his promotion to the Abbacy create any change in his manners or dispositions. In power he was the same modest and condescending individual he had ever been, in a subordinate station; observing to the letter the following maxim of wisdom prescribed in the book of Ecclesiasticus, "Have they made thee ruler? Be not puffed up, but be amidst thy people as one of them, mild, affable, and courteous alike to all." Yet he would have recourse to correction, if at any time necessary, for the preservation of good order. But his chief resource on such occasions was expostulation and entreaty. And these he delivered with such an habitual tenderness and natural affection as impressed on all who heard a reluctance to do wrong, and darken with clouds of uneasiness at their misconduct, that serene brightness of tranquility which beamed upon his countenance.

Oftentimes walking out to manage the affairs of the house, he would join the brethren wherever he found them at work, and either guide the plough, beat iron with a mallet, turn the winnowing-van, or assist in any other hard labour; for his constitution was robust, his discourse engaging, his aspect agreeable, his mind cheerful, and his hand bountiful. Though Abbot, he ever contented himself with the ordinary

fare of the monastery, always took his meals with the monks, and continued to lodge in the same narrow cell in which he slept previous to his promotion. Even after evident symptoms announced his dissolution to approach, he remained two days in the public dormitory, and only for the last five of his life permitted himself to be removed to a more commodious and retired apartment. From this he one day came forth, and placed in the open air, desired that all the congregation might assemble around him. When collected he gave them his last farewell, and with that affectionate sensibility which nature had planted and grace brought to maturity in his heart, he imparted to each the kiss of peace amidst loud and general sobs and cries, at the loss of so loving a father and so worthy a pastor.

He expired whilst the monks were chaunting lauds soon after midnight on the 7th* of March.† He was admitted into the monastery at the age of twenty-four, where he abode twelve years; during seven he enjoyed the rank of priest; and to this for the last four of his life was added the dignity of Abbot. He closed his mortal career, and putting off this frail and corruptible body, ascended to the regions of incorruptible bliss.

[* Giles says 9th.—ED. *present Edition*.] † Obiit anno 685.

Having now given a compendium of the life of this venerable man, we will return to our principal narrative.

Soon after the appointment of Eosterwine to the Abbacy of St. Peter, and of Ceolfrid to the direction of St. Paul, Benedict had undertaken, and with his wonted prosperity accomplished his sixth and last journey to the City of Rome. Thence he now returned laden as formerly with a store of ecclesiastical treasures. These, as usual, consisted of a bountiful provision of sacred writings and an elegant collection of holy pictures. For he brought home on this occasion the life of our Lord Jesus Christ described in one series of paintings, with which he beautified the whole interior of the church annexed to the greater monastery, in honour of the virgin Mother of God. For the decoration also of St. Paul's church and abbey he had procured another set in which, upon an admirable system, was displayed the concordance between the Old and New Testaments. Of this to give an instance: Isaac carrying the wood whereon he was ordered to be immolated, and Jesus bearing the cross on which he died a sacrifice for our sins, are drawn in one piece and exhibited as corresponding subjects; in a second are paired together the Son of Man hanging on the cross,

and the brazen serpent raised by Moses in the desert.

Among a great variety of other valuable acquisitions, Benedict this time imported two cloaks woven entirely of silk and most admirably wrought. In exchange for these he obtained of King Alfrid and his Council (for Egfrid during his absence had been slain), three hides of land near the mouth and on the south bank of the River Wear.

But the joy which the success of this last journey diffused, received a powerful check from the melancholy disasters which had occurred at home whilst our founder was prosecuting his pious labours abroad. For at his return he found Eosterwine, his shepherd, dead, and his flock severely thinned by the ravages of pestilence. His grief, however, at these heavy calamities was considerably abated on learning the judicious choice made by the surviving brethren, with the concurrence of his co-Abbot Ceolfred, of a successor to the deceased Eosterwine. For in his place they had elected a member of the same community who possessed the same angelic meekness of temper, and bore amongst his brethren the same high respectability of character. This was the deacon Sigfrid, a man suf-



ficiently versed in Scriptural knowledge, of excellent morals, and of admirable temperance, but permitted by Providence, for the preservation of the virtues and innocence which graced his soul, to labour under many infirmities of the body, and enfeebled by an incurable disorder of the lungs.

Nor was it long before our venerable founder began to feel the oppressive hand of distemper. For it pleased the Lord to put the eminent piety of these two holy men to trial by suffering them both to be cast upon the bed of sickness, for the beneficent purpose of crowning their fidelity with the additional lustre of a virtuous resignation to his appointments, and of raising them, as soon as their lingering afflictions were removed by death from this land of pain and misery, to an eternal refreshment in the light and peace of His heavenly glory.

Before he was admitted into this happiness Sigfrid, as we have already observed, endured a slow martyrdom from the perpetual gnawings of the direful disease which preyed upon his lungs and intestines. Nor were Bennet's sufferings less grievous. For the last three years of his life were passed under the pressure of continual sickness. To such a degree were his

lower limbs paralysed that he died below whilst he lived above ; the portion of animation left him being barely sufficient to protract a sorrowful existence, and ennoble the heroic fortitude and pious resignation with which he supported his afflictions.

For under their accumulated woes these two favourites of heaven ceased not to pour forth their souls in the devoutest acts of thanksgiving to the Lord. The divine praise, or the exhortations of their brethren, were the sole and continual objects of their thoughts. Benedict especially was attentive whenever the monks, whose visits were very frequent approached him, to press them with all his eloquence to a constant and scrupulous observance of their rules. "Think not, my beloved children," he would often say, "that the constitutions which I have delivered you are the offspring of my own untutored invention. No, they are fruits which have been gathered in my remote and numerous peregrinations, with unceasing research and indefatigable diligence. For you I culled with unwearied hands every excellence that presented itself to the eye of my eager scrutiny, through no less than seventeen celebrated monasteries. To you I have committed, and to your pious and perpetual observance

with my dying breath, I recommend the whole result of my past labours and enquiries."

He would then warmly conjure them to preserve for ever entire the extensive and magnificent library, which at various periods he had imported, and which was so essentially necessary to their due instruction, warning them on no account to permit the precious volumes to be squandered or even soiled through neglect and carelessness. But above all, he implored them in their elections of Abbots to despise the vain distinctions of rank and wealth, and to regard in their choice virtue alone and real merit. "Believe me," he added, "of the two evils, should it ever please God to permit either, I would rather see this very spot on which our convent stands become, and for ever remain, a dreary unfrequented wild, than that my brother according to the flesh, who we know walketh not in the ways of godliness, should at my death succeed to the office of Abbot. Wherefore, in your nomination of a future father, neither let your suffrages be influenced by authority and affection, nor seek your shepherd from abroad; but select from the midst of your own flock according to the rule of Benedict the Great and the privileges of your charter, whomsoever you shall with common agreement judge the best

qualified and most worthy by virtue and learning to preside over you. And though the object of your choice, after holding an unanimous and charitable inquisition, prove to be the youngest and most ignoble brother in the monastery, let the Bishop be invited to ratify the appointment and confirm your elect in office, by imparting to him the accustomed Benediction. For (he concluded), as they who propagate by carnal generation a line of earthly successors, are governed in their discrimination of inheritors solely by earthly and carnal views, so they who, by the spiritual regeneration of the divine word raise up children to God, should be actuated in their proceedings purely by divine and spiritual motives. Wherefore, it is their duty to confer on such of their spiritual offspring as possess the largest portion of the Spirit their chief confidence and estimation, in the same manner worldly parents confer on their first begotten the principal honours and inheritance of their families."

Neither ought we to pass over in silence the religious expedient devised by our afflicted Abbot to relieve, during the progress of his severe distemper, the tediousness of his long and sleepless nights. For that his soul might rise, unsubdued by earthly pains and sorrows

to heavenly desires and contemplations, he took refuge in the consolations of the divine word. With this pious view he ordinarily engaged some of the brethren, as he was now unable to read himself, to spend the night with him in reading aloud either the edifying narrative of the sufferings and patience of Job, or some other select and appropriate passage of the Scripture. When, too, his feeble limbs could no longer bear him to the choir to assist at the usual exercises of devotion, and his tongue and voice denied their office in singing the appointed courses of psalmody, he invited to his apartment at every canonical* hour of day and night,

* The canonical service here intimated is the course of office prescribed in the Breviary. Of this compilation the principal part is selected from the Psalms of David and the writings of the prophets. To relieve the fatigue of uniformity a competent number of lessons are added from the other books of the holy Scriptures, the works of the ancient fathers and the acts of the most celebrated martyrs. The different portions of it are terminated by prayers of noble and affecting simplicity.

In monasteries a considerable share of the night, as well as of the day, was devoted to the singing of this course. It was divided into seven parts or hours, called matins and lauds, prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, and compline; by the Saxons, uht or morning-song, prime-song, under-song, midday-song, none-song, even-song, and night-song. Matins, or morning-song, was begun immediately after midnight, and the other parts at the hours their respective names imply. At each of these the clergy were summoned to the church to sing, in imitation of the royal prophet, the praises of the Creator. The layman was exhorted, but the

some of his religious associates. These he divided into two choirs, and as far as his imperfect power of utterance would allow, accompanied them himself whilst in alternate versicles they sung the Psalms. Thus, with an ingenuity and vigour which nothing but invincible fervour of spirit could have inspired, did this model of suffering piety compensate, by employing the charitable aid of others, for every deficiency caused by languor of body in himself.

The two infirm Abbots were now reduced to extremity, and, by the continual and excessive decays of protracted illness, completely exhausted. They felt and saw themselves placed on the brink of the grave, and destitute of all hope of ever again being competent to conduct the management of affairs. Under these circumstances a mutual desire one day seized them of holding an interview, for the purpose of once more conversing with each other before they were taken from this world for ever. To effect

ecclesiastic was commanded, to assist. Of this difference the reason is obvious. The clergy had been liberated from all secular employments that they might attend, with fewer impediments, to their spiritual functions; it was therefore expected that by their assiduity they would compensate for the deficiencies of their less fervent brethren, and by their daily supplications avert the anger, and call down the blessings of the Almighty.—Wilk. pp. 97, 252, and Ling. *Ang.-Sax. Ch.*, p. 198.

this Sigfrid was carried on a bier from his own to Benedict's apartment. Here by the aid of attendants he was laid on the same bed, so that both their heads reclined on one pillow. But, for the manifestation of the power of Christ in restoring his servants, such was their present state of debility, that though now placed in contact they were unable, with every effort their remains of strength could make, to impart to one another the last kiss of peace. Melancholy indeed was this spectacle, and drew floods of tears from the surrounding brethren, who, raising their shattered frames, enabled them to perform that last office of charity.

This done, Benedict, in conjunction with Sigfrid and all the congregation, who are for that purpose immediately convened, opens a council to deliberate on the means of providing for the future welfare of the institution. With the advice and concurrence of all present he calls for Ceolfred, whom he had formerly appointed to the Abbacy of St. Paul, a man ever most dear to him, not so much for their alliance in blood as for their union and similarity in virtue. Him he constituted Abbot over both houses and communities, with the unanimous consent and applause of the assembly, and with a decided conviction on his part that the peace, unity, and

concord of the society would flourish most under one ruler and pastor. In proof of this he would repeatedly instance the kingdom of Israel, ever uninvaded and invincible to foreign nations whilst united under the banners of one of its native generals, but no sooner disunited, in punishment for the sins of its inhabitants by domestic broils and rival contests, than it was shaken to its foundation and speedily fell down in ruins. To this also he would often add the known warning given in the text of the Gospel, "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate."*

From the period of enacting the above salutary regulation, scarce had two months revolved their course when Sigfrid, having now passed the ordeal of temporal affliction and patiently struggled through the bitter waves of many tribulations, was translated to the mansions of eternal rest. His happy spirit entered the house of the Lord, paying Him the vows which his undefiled lips had assiduously pronounced in burnt offerings of perennial thanksgiving and praise.

Nor did Benedict, the intrepid foe to vice and strenuous patron of virtue, long survive the departure of his lamented friend ; for within four

* Matth. xii. 25.

months afterwards he too closed his godly career.

The night destined for his exit rushed on with rude and wintry blast, speedily to be transformed into the serene effulgence of an eternal day, in which unbounded felicity and inextinguishable splendour shall ever reign. The monks throng into the church ; sleep is banished from every eye ; and the solemn darkness of the night is passed in watching, psalmody, and prayer. For as every heart is torn with grief at the near prospect of for ever losing so excellent a father, all are eager in striving to mitigate the inward anguish of their souls by raising their afflicted thoughts to Heaven in canticles of praise. Many crowd into the cell where the dying saint is laid, languid and emaciated in body but vigorous and robust in soul, viewing with unshaken intrepidity the uplifted arm of death, in humble expectation of a new and better life.

For his consolation in this hour of trial the Gospel is read aloud by one of the priests, as had been done on previous nights. When his end approaches he receives the Viaticum of the sacred body and blood of Our Lord. Soon after this consoling act of religion his happy soul, purified from all earthly dross by the chast-

ening flames of long and profitable sufferings, quits the confinement of this mortal frame of clay, and securely wings its flight to the ethereal realms of endless peace and immortality.

That no foul sprite or infernal foe could stop or retard it in its way, the spiritual song which the brethren were chaunting at the moment of its exit from the body, was a consoling presage. For at the commencement of night they began the psalter, and continuing to sing the Psalms in regular succession, had reached and were intoning the eighty-second when this blessed spirit took its flight. Now of this Psalm the first words are, "O God, who is like unto Thee?" and the whole tenour of it implies that the enemies of the name of Christ, whether spiritual or incarnate, are ever alike busily employed in plotting to subvert His church or to supplant His faithful servants. But that agaist His spouse and elect their malignant efforts will prove vain, whilst on themselves they shall be retorted in everlasting woe, confusion, and disappointment. For their might will be enervated by the Lord, to Whom none is equal or similar, and Who alone rules supreme over the wide extended universe. Wherefore we may piously conclude, that the singing of this Psalm at the precise moment a pure spirit ascended

from the earth, over which Satan and his confederate fiends had no power, was a coincidence of events permitted by divine appointment.

It was in the sixteenth year after the foundation of the monastery, and on the twelfth* day of January, that our glorious founder rested in the Lord. He was interred in the church which had been dedicated by himself to St. Peter, so that after death his corpse reposed near the altar and relics of that holy Apostle whom with such pious affection and veneration he had ever loved during life, and by whom he was admitted into the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven. He governed his monastery, as we have already stated, sixteen years: eight in person, without the help of any coadjutors, and the same number chiefly by proxy. For the venerable men, Eosterwine, Sigfrid, and Ceolfrid, each in their turns held under him the title, and exercised the authority and functions of Abbots. The first-named four, the second three, and the last one year.

This last (Ceolfrid) was himself a man of most extraordinary diligence and superior quickness of apprehension; prompt in carrying into effect but prudent in forming designs, and un-

[* Giles says 14th.—ED. *present Edition*.]

rivalled in piety. It was he, as before mentioned, who by the orders and with the concurrence of Benedict, superintended and completed the foundation, and for seven years directed the government of St. Paul's Abbey, at Jarrow. The same venerable man with consummate wisdom afterwards presided eight and twenty years over both the Abbeys, or what may be more properly be termed one Abbey dedicated to the two chief Apostles, and built upon two sites.

During this long administration Ceolfrid brought to a happy conclusion all the admirable plans for promoting piety which his distinguished predecessor had begun. Time also suggested, and enabled him to carry into execution, numerous improvements of his own. Amongst a great variety of these we ought particularly to notice that he considerably augmented the number of private oratories, or chapels of ease, added largely to the plate and sacred vestments of the church, and with an ardour which equalled the past energy of Benedict in founding, he nearly doubled the libraries of both his monasteries. Besides innumerable other literary acquisitions he procured three pandects of the new, added to one he had formerly brought

from Rome, of the old translation of the Bible.* In his latter days, departing again for that city, he took with him as a donative one of these three valued volumes, leaving to his monasteries the other two. In exchange for a book of Cosmography of admirable execution, purchased by Benedict at Rome, he obtained of King Alfrid, a Prince deeply versed in literature, eight hides of land on the bank of the River Fresca, which were given in possession to the monastery of Jarrow. This contract with Alfrid was begun in the life-time, but had not been concluded at the death, of our founder. In the succeeding reign Ceolfrid exchanged this land on the Fresca, paying the just difference for twenty hides lying in a situation nearer and more commodious to the convent, at a place called in the vernacular tongue of the inhabitants, Sambuce.

* At the time when our ancestors were converted, different Latin versions of the Scriptures were in use among the western Christians. The same diversity prevailed in the Anglo-Saxon Church during its infancy. At Lindisfarne the Psalms were sung according to a translation from the Greek, corrected by St. Jerome; at Canterbury according to another translation from the Greek, which Eddius calls the fifth edition.

This new translation procured by Ceolfrid was that of St. Jerome. It quickly superseded the old, except in the church office in which they continued to sing the Psalms and a few other parts after the more ancient version.—Ling. Notes to *Ang.-Sax. Ch.*

[See Appendix II. for some further information about these Bibles.]

Neither was the attention of Ceolfrid limited to improvements at home. In the reign of the Pontiff Sergius he sent to Rome a deputation of his brethren, by whom he requested and obtained for his Abbeys fresh letters of immunity similar to those conceded by Agatho, at the solicitation of Benedict. These, when brought to England, were exhibited before a synod of Bishops holden in the presence of King Alfrid, and duly ratified by both royal and episcopal sanction, receiving the signatures of all present after the form in which it is well known the prior grants of immunity had been confirmed by the then reigning Monarch and an assembly of Prelates. Before the close of Ceolfrid's administration Witmer, a most devout and well-disciplined soldier of Christ and a man profoundly versed in both sacred and profane lore, consecrated himself to religion in the Abbey of St. Peter. At the same time he surrendered to it in perpetual right an estate originally granted him by King Alfrid of ten hides of land, situated near the town of Daldun.

After a long series of years spent in the strictest observance of those pious institutes which himself and Benedict, with equal and united diligence, had collected and prescribed on the authority of prior establishments; after

an incomparable perseverance and proficiency in the science of prayer and the art of psalmody, to which he had so long been inured by daily exercise ; after exhibiting a wonderful spirit of firmness and rigour in restraining the vicious, and a most charitable mildness in encouraging the good ; after restricting himself to a parsimony in diet and apparel almost unprecedented in the persons of Rectors, Ceolfrid, now advanced in years and full of days, found his strength unequal to the burthen of office. For, depressed by the infirmities of age, he was no longer able to display either by the force of instruction or of personal regularity, a due model of spiritual perfection.

This unhappy situation for some time kept his mind in a wavering perplexity of thought. At length, however, he resolved after charging his monks, according to the privilege of their order and the rule of Benedict, to elect the most worthy member of their own community Abbot in his stead, to betake himself to Rome, which city he had once before visited when a youth in the company of our founder. To this resolution he was prompted by a wish to allow himself, before death, a small intermission from the heat and burthen of the day under which he had so long toiled for the benefit of others, that

withdrawing into the shade of tranquility he might turn all his care and attention to the improvement of himself. In the next place he was desirous of affording his brethren an opportunity of living under the direction of a younger Abbot, that the example of a more active leader might inspire them with greater ardour in the pursuit of virtue.

Instigated by these reflections Ceolfrid resisted all the tears and pressing entreaties with which his brethren on their knees laboured to detain him, and persisting in his design prepared with such alacrity for his journey, that on the third day after publicly disclosing his resolution all things were ready for his departure. For he feared (as it actually happened) that death would overtake him before it would be in his power to arrive at the end of his journey. He was anxious also to prevent his intention from being divulged abroad by a speedy disappearance, that he might escape by flight the obstinate opposition he would otherwise have to encounter from friends and persons of quality, by whom he was universally beloved and respected. Finally, he dreaded that presents of money might come in for which he would have no opportunity of making a requital, and it had ever been with him a principle to return, either

immediately or on some seasonable occasion, an equivalent for all benefactions.

To prevent these inconveniences, early in the morning of Thursday, the fourth of June,* after solemn mass had been sung in the Church of the Virgin, and also in St. Peter's, and after all present had received the Holy Communion, our Abbot girds himself for his pilgrimage. The brethren instantly crowd into the church where Ceolfrid, after kindling the incense and praying before the altar turns to the west, and with the flaming censer in his hand addresses to all around him the salutation of peace. From the church they then proceed, mingling all the way loud sobs and cries with the responses of the Litany, into the oratory of the blessed martyr St. Lawrence, which stands in front of the dormitory. Here Ceolfrid pronounces his last farewell, bestows his blessing upon all and earnestly exhorts them in correcting offences, strictly to observe the maxims prescribed in the Gospel. To all who had ever incurred his displeasure, if any ever had, he imparts his sincerest forgiveness and reconciliation, begs to be remembered in their prayers, and craves in his turn, if he had ever treated any of them with unjustifiable rigour, their charitable pardon.

[* Giles says Wednesday the 4th of May.—ED. *present Edition*.]



Having delivered this moving address he immediately descends, accompanied by the whole convent, to the river's strand where, after receiving in tears the last kiss of peace, all kneel whilst he pronounces a prayer aloud, and embarks with his attendants. The deacons precede him bearing a golden cross and lighted tapers in their hands. The skiff glides swiftly across the Wear, Ceolfrid reverences the cross and mounting on his steed, disappears.

At his departure there was left in both the Abbeys a congregation composed of about six hundred members.

Disconsolate at the loss of their shepherd, the brethren in mournful silence retrace their steps to the church. With tears and fervent supplications they commit themselves and all their concerns to the care and protection of heaven. After a short pause of silent grief and devotion they intone the Psalms of Terce. This done, a general council is again convened to deliberate on the measures proper to be adopted in the present state of their affairs. An unanimous resolution to implore, in the first instance with fasting and prayer, the aid and light of heaven to hasten and guide them in the choice of another pastor speedily terminates the consulta-

tion. The congregation at Jarrow, by a deputation formed of some of their own and of several members from the other Abbey who had been present at their councils, transmit a statement of their determinations to the mother convent. These are no sooner heard than approved. All are of one mind ; all elevate their hearts ; all raise their voices to the Lord.

On Whitsunday,* the third day devoted to prayer and humiliation, a council is convoked of all the brethren in St. Peter's Abbey. A considerable body of elders from St. Paul's likewise attend the meeting. The greatest concord and unanimity pervade the assembly, and Huetbert is by all invited as with one voice to assume the government of both houses.

This favourite of their choice had been received into the monastery in his tender childhood. From that early period of life he had been trained under their own vigilant care to the constant observance of monastic discipline. With unwearied pains he had perfected himself, and afterwards instructed many others in the arts of reading, writing,† and church music.

[* Giles says Easter Sunday.—ED. *present Edition*.]

† As at this period the art of printing was unknown, great attention was paid in monasteries to writing. Every great Abbey

In the time of the Pontiff Sergius he had also visited Rome, and during a long residence in the chief seat of learning (at that period) he had carefully studied, transcribed, and on his return brought home in manuscript, every branch of knowledge which he deemed necessary or useful. Lastly, he had been raised, twelve years before his present promotion, to the dignity of Presbyter.

No sooner is Huetbert by unanimous suffrage declared Abbot than, selecting a few of his monks to bear him company he hastens to overtake Ceolfrid. They find him still on the coast awaiting the arrival of a vessel to transport him across the sea. On learning the election which had taken place he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God," gave his sanction to the appointment, and received from the hand of his successor a commendatory epistle to Pope Gregory.

A few sentences of this we will here subjoin as a memorial :—

took care to reserve a scriptorium, or an apartment for the transcribing of books, where several monks were assiduously occupied in copying the manuscripts of sacred and profane literature. This commendable employment was pursued with peculiar diligence at Croyland. A book of the Gospels even now existing exhibits a fine specimen of Saxon caligraphy. To render the office more firm and permanent pensions or estate, were often annexed to it.—Daniel's *Eccl. Hist.* p. 264.

“To the most holy and truly loving Lord Gregory, Pontiff of the sacred and Apostolic See, Huetbert, Abbot of the monastery founded in Saxony under the patronage of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, sendeth perpetual salutation in the Lord.

“We, together with all the pious brethren who, in these remote confines of the world are, under our care, endeavouring to obtain tranquility of soul by submitting to the sweet yoke of Jesus, give thanks ever to Almighty God for the gracious dispensation of His providence by which he hath in our days raised up you, as a glorious vessel of election, to preside over the administration of His whole church. For the splendour of faith and truth, which through you He is pleased to diffuse, sheddeth as a brilliant star, the divine light of piety on every part of his flock.

“To your holy attention and kindness most beloved Father in Christ, we beg leave to recommend the hoary age of our venerable Abbot Ceolfrið. Long hath he been our parent, protector, and guide in the paths of spiritual life and the peaceful virtues of our retired profession. But as neither entreaties nor tears, nor every other demonstration of the excess of our

grief at his departure could prevail on him to remain any longer at the head of our society, we give thanks in the first place to the holy and undivided Trinity, that by withdrawing from us he himself at least will attain that saintly repose for which his bosom hath so long and earnestly panted. For such were the transports of joy which he was ever wont to experience at the bare recollection of those scenes of piety he had witnessed, and of the tender devotion he had felt in his youth, that though now consumed with age he is determined to repeat his visit to the residence of the Apostles. And as if, after forty years of incessant care and fatigue in the vigilant superintendence over his monasteries his vigour were renewed, and heaven had sent him a fresh inspiration to holiness of life, with a constancy unparalleled he has again commenced his peregrinations for the love of Christ, though he is now broken down with years and fast approaching to the grave. So vehement is the holy man's desire to consume in the flames of fervent devotion every grain of dross which his soul may possibly have contracted in the unavoidable dissipation of secular concerns.

“In the next place, we humbly beseech your paternity, sedulously to perform for our aged father those last offices of piety which it has not

fallen to our happy lot to administer. For the rest, we are well assured that though his body repose with you, his devout spirit, whether in the body or delivered from the prison of the flesh, will ever most powerfully intercede with the Lord, both in your and our behalf, for the remission of our defects."

As soon as Huetbert, after delivering this epistle to his predecessor, returned to the convent, Bishop Acca, at the solicitation of the brethren, confirmed him, with the accustomed benediction, in the office of Abbot. His subsequent administration was signalized by the skilful and manly address with which he restored to the Abbey a long catalogue of her rights which had been lost or invaded. He afforded also a most singular satisfaction to his whole fraternity by translating the mortal remains of Eosterwine, and Sigfrid who was formerly his master. The first he removed from the porch at the entrance of St. Peter's, the second from the south of the open burial ground. He placed both in one coffer divided by a partition and laid them near the relics of Benedict within the body of the church. This work of pious affection to the dead was performed on Sigfrid's birthday, the twenty-second* of August. On

[* Giles says 23rd.—ED. *present Edition*.]

the same day by a remarkable dispensation of providence, the devout servant of Christ, Witmer, departed this life and was interred in one of the graves left vacant by the translation of the above-named Abbots, of whose virtues he had ever been a most faithful imitator.

In the meanwhile Ceolfrit as already stated, was pursuing his way to the residence of the Apostles; but overcome by age, fatigue and infirmity he breathed his last before he arrived at the term of his desires. About nine in the morning he reached Langres, and about four in the evening of the same day he ceased from all his labours and travels by rendering up his pure spirit into the hands of his Creator. On the following day he was honourably interred in the Church of the Three Brother Martyrs, amidst the tears and lamentations, not of the English only, of whom more than eighty had accompanied him from home, but also of the native inhabitants of the country in which he expired. For even strangers were deeply affected at the disappointment which had befallen the pious wishes of so venerable a man. Nor, indeed, was it easy to witness without weeping the melancholy spectacle before their eyes. For the numerous attendants of the deceased Abbot, as a large family suddenly bereft of a loving and

beloved parent, were thrown into confusion, oppressed with sorrow, and dispersed. Some persisted in finishing the half accomplished journey, in others grief had extinguished all desire of seeing Rome, and they were returning home to report the mournful tidings of their disaster ; whilst the rest, unable to quit the tomb of one whose love could never be erased from their hearts, resolved to fix their residence in a land with the language and inhabitants of which they were totally unacquainted.

Ceolfrid died at the age of seventy-four. . To the priesthood he had been an ornament forty-seven years, and an honour to the character of Abbot thirty-five, or rather forty-three years. For even when Benedict founded St. Peter's Ceolfrid was his individual companion, fellow labourer, and joint teacher of monastic discipline. In the strict observance of this, so great was his own ardour that he allowed neither age nor infirmity, nor even the inconveniences of travelling, to abate his pristine fervour. From the day he left his monastery to the day of his exit out of this world, he never once failed daily to recite, besides the course of the Breviary, the whole Psalter in regular order twice.* And

* Ceolfrid left his monastery on the fourth of June and died on the twenty-fifth of September, having been in all one hundred and fourteen days on his journey.

even when so reduced that unable to sit on horseback he was borne in a litter, he continued daily to offer the holy victim of salvation. For he sung mass every day except that on which he crossed the ocean, and the last three of his life.

He died, as we have above stated, a little past four in the afternoon of the twenty-fifth of September, and in the year of Christ seven hundred and sixteen. His death happened in the vicinity, and the day after it he was buried about one mile to the south of the city we have already named, in the Church of the Three Brother Martyrs. His corpse was attended to the grave, and the Psalms of his funeral office sung by a large concourse formed of the English who had borne him company from home, of the inhabitants of the town, and of the monastery in which he was interred.

The martyrs to whom this monastery is dedicated are Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Meleusippus. They were born at the same birth, regenerated in the same faith of Christ, and suffered in the same place, together with their aunt Leonilla, a glorious martyrdom for His sake.

May they now exert in favour of our unworthy selves and our parent, their powerful intercession with the Lord.

APPENDIX I.

FROM the abrupt manner in which the narrative concerning Huetbert stops short, it is obvious that the relation of his life was left unfinished ; probably because he survived the venerable writer who began, but, as the subject of his memoir was still amongst the living, could not bring his story to a conclusion.

With Bede the history of the monasteries likewise may be said to have ceased, so unsatisfactory is the account given of them from his time by posterior writers. The conditions of this work do not indeed allow us to treat this portion of history minutely ; but as the reader, who has seen in the preceding pages the beginning and the flourishing condition of these establishments, may be desirous of knowing the fatal catastrophes which brought them to their end, we will briefly state them.

Wearmouth is said to have suffered severely in the Danish wars, and supposed to have been destroyed in the irruption of Hinguar and Hubba. It was however restored, but by whom or in what manner history does not acquaint

us;* and again destroyed in the inroad made by Malcolm, King of Scotland.

Jarrow was equally unfortunate, for it is also said to have been destroyed in the first instance by the Danes, about the year 793, and again in 1069, when William the Conqueror took his revenge on the northern part of England.

The restoration of both monasteries under the influence of Walcher, who was consecrated Bishop of Durham in 1072, is detailed partly by Simeon of Durham, and partly by Dugdale, in his account of St. Mary's, at York.

Aldwine, a monk at Winchcomb, with two associates Elfwy and Renfrid, was first placed by the Bishop at Jarrow. But in a few years the inhabitants of the monastery growing too numerous, they separated, Aldwine, taking a few followers, retired to Melrose, in Scotland; Renfrid removed to Whitby, and Elfwy remained with the first settlers at Jarrow.

Aldwine and his brethren, after suffering much in their new habitation from Malcolm, King of Scotland, were recalled by Bishop Walcher, who

* Vide Hutchinson's *History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*. V. II. p. 503.

gave them for a residence the ruined monastery of St. Peter's, at Wearmouth.

But in 1083 Bishop William de Carilepho removed the greater part of the monks from both monasteries to Durham. Wearmouth and Jarrow from this period to the dissolution of religious houses were cells only, subordinate to the monastery of Durham, and rarely inhabited by more than three or four monks each.

At the Dissolution Wearmouth appears to have been valued, according to Dugdale, at £23 8s. 4d., and Jarrow at £40 7s. 8d. per annum.

PETER WILCOCK.

APPENDIX II.

THE CODEX AMIATINUS.

IN the *Church Quarterly Review* some twenty-five years ago, there appeared a most interesting article on the Pandects mentioned on page 81, which was written by the Rev. John Low Low, then Vicar of Whittonstall. This was reprinted in pamphlet form in 1903, but soon went out of print.

It told the story of the Codex Amiatinus, and of the romantic manner in which various scholars, step by step, proved beyond all doubt this Codex to be one of the three great Pandects written in the time of Ceolfrid at Wearmouth and Jarrow.

These Bibles were manuscript copies of a Latin version of St. Jerome, commonly called the Vulgate. Three copies were written at the sister monasteries, one being for use in each, and the third being intended for a gift to the See of St. Peter at Rome. The first two copies were undoubtedly destroyed when the Danes sacked and burnt everything possible in

the County of Durham in the ninth or at the close of the eighth century. The third copy was taken by Ceolfrid on his journey to Rome at the advanced age of 74, in the year 716. But he never reached Rome, as he died at Langres, in France, and his large retinue, consisting of some 80 persons, was scattered, some returning home, others settling in France, and possibly a few continuing their journey to the Holy City.

We have no account of what became of the Bible; we only know that it was found in the Convent of Monte Amiata, and that it is now considered the greatest treasure in the Mediceo-Laurentian Library in Florence.

The Bishop of Salisbury says :—"The great Bible of Monte Amiata, now one of the most prominent ornaments of the Mediceo-Laurentian Library at Florence, is at once a most important specimen of palæography and one of the principal foundations of the text of any critical edition of the version of St. Jerome, both in the Old and New Testaments. . . . It is a book measuring about 50 by 34 centim. (19·7 by 13·4 inches) in length and breadth, and nearly 20 centim. (7·9 inches) in thickness without the binding; containing 1,029 leaves of beautiful vellum, written in two columns to a page with 43 or 44 lines to a column, in short lines tech-

nically called cola and commata, or sometimes, perhaps less correctly, stichi, which represent an ancient system of punctuation perfectly intelligible to the trained eye."

This Bible had been long known and highly admired and greatly esteemed by scholars. The story of how it was identified by discovering that a Latin inscription had been partially erased, and how the original one was discovered and reinstated is too long to be related here. We must, as Canon Low says, "rejoice that the third Pandect of St. Ceolfrid was [at the time when our monasteries were destroyed] far away in Italy, safe from the heathen ravager, and that it has remained to this day the admiration of all who behold it, to be a monument of the pious zeal and learning of the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and their learned and holy Abbot, St. Ceolfrid."

JAMES PATTERSON.

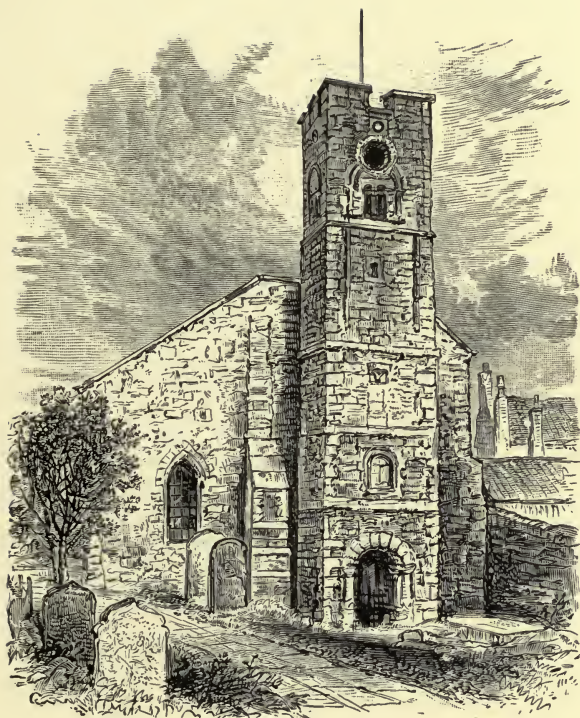
APPENDIX III.

MONKWEARMOUTH CHURCH

IN 1910.

VERY little is known of the history of the church after the Dissolution. To a great extent this is undoubtedly owing to a fire which took place in the Vicarage, then inhabited by the Rev. Jonathan Ivison, on 13th April, 1790. This house, formerly the residence of the Williamson family, is supposed to have been part of the monastery and attached to the church. In this lamentable fire almost all the Parish Registers, which were of great antiquity, perished. To remedy this loss as far as was possible, all persons were desired to produce copies of such private registers as they might be in possession of, and these were sworn to before the magistrates.

The church was restored to its present form in 1875, and unfortunately without much real regard or reverence for the original work. The less said the better about the new gable end and its conjunction with the fine old grey tower.



MONKWEARMOUTH PARISH CHURCH
BEFORE THE RESTORATION IN 1875.



At this restoration the foundations, which were uncovered, showed that the original building had been 68 feet long by 22 feet 8 inches wide (outside measurements), a harmonious arrangement, the length being three times that of the width; the height is thought by some to have been half the length, by others the same as the width. This comprised the nave, but we know from Bede that there was a porch at the east end as well as at the west; the latter he calls a "porch entrance." This still stands, but no trace whatever can be found of the other. It was in this eastern porch that Abbots Sigfrid and Eosterwine were buried, near the body of Benedict Biscop.

The porch now remaining originally had entrances from the north and south sides, the present archway leading to another chamber, probably a baptistry.

It is considered very doubtful if the upper part of the tower was the work of Biscop. The position of two small windows high up in the western wall shows conclusively that it was not part of his original plan. It is, of course, quite possible that Biscop may have added it himself at a later date, but it is generally believed to belong to a date prior to the Conquest.

At the entrance to the tower there is some very singular stone carving, viz., two very curious snakes with beaks strangely intertwined, which most unfortunately are rapidly perishing from the crumbling of the stone due to the action of the weather. It is said these snakes are quite unique, there being nothing like this work in any other church, although there is a fragment of stone containing some very similar interlacing bands in the church at Escomb, one of the oldest churches in this County.

On the outside of the tower there is a string course consisting of a band of stone with cable mouldings, with similar vertical lines to divide it into panels. The panels are filled in with figures of animals in low relief, now almost illegible, of a somewhat grotesque character : one may be taken for a hog or a bear, others for puppies or lambs.

In former times carvings in churches, or figures in windows, of a sheaf of corn, a pig, and a lamb, were considered emblematical of the three sources from which the clergy derived their tithes. If this were so it may explain the meaning of these figures.

Above the carving of the snakes on each side of the porch are twin balusters. Many of these

are preserved in the vestry, and eight are in situ, which is considered to be unique; a large number of them can also be seen at Jarrow. These balusters are found in several old churches, the nearest being in the belfry windows at Billingham church, near Stockton-on-Tees, where there is also some interlaced ornament.

The restorers of 1875 deserve every praise for their care in preserving all the fragments of old stone work which were then found, and for building them into the vestry walls, thus securing their preservation for all time.

Amongst these are two fine statuesque lions about 18 inches long. They are of Romanesque style and present the appearance of each being in a cage, two sides of which are solid and two are open, a column at the corner supporting the roof.

The large tombstone preserved in the vestry was found face downwards at the time of the excavations necessary in 1866 to reopen the west porch, which for more than a generation had been buried in ship's ballast. It is a very fine piece of work, the cross standing out in bold relief. The inscription is "*Hic in Sepulchro requiescit corpore Herehericht P.R.B.*," which is "Here in the Sepulchre rests in the

body the Priest Hereberecht," or Herbert as we would now say.

A casual examination shows that it has not been all done by the same artist. The first lines are evidently by a designer of a superior order, and the stone was probably done "for stock" for use when required, and so when Hereberecht died the monks had to employ a local stonemason to complete it, which he did in a very inferior manner. Some odd letters at the end look as if there had been a previous inscription imperfectly erased. The style of lettering and the wording of the epitaph point to an early date, probably about the time of Bis cop himself.

split in pen !

Visitors should not omit to carefully examine a fragment of a beautifully carved stone, as it is one of the most beautiful of its kind. It is a small corner piece, only about twelve inches each way, and of a yellowish tint. The great interest in this fragment is not so much its beauty, great as that is, as because of its resemblance in the ornamentation to that of one of the greatest treasures in the British Museum—the Lindisfarne Gospels.

The Bishop of Bristol in a pamphlet published about 30 years ago says, "No one can

turn over the pages of that marvellous volume in its home in the British Museum, noting the stains of salt water, from its immersion in the sea, when the monks fled from the Danes with the body of St. Cuthbert, without feeling a special thrill when he comes to the last page and reads the record of the names of those who wrote it, and beautified it, and made a case for it."* It is not too much to say that there is no stone work known that has a more close resemblance to the beautifully illuminated pages of these Gospels than this little fragment so carefully preserved in the vestry of Monkwearmouth Parish Church.

* This record is of such an interesting nature that it is reproduced here. The following is a translation :—"Eadfrith, Bishop of the Lindisfarne Church [was] he [who] at the first wrote this book in honour of God and St. Cuthbert, and all the saints in common that are in the Island. And Ethilwald, Bishop of the people of the Lindisfarne Island, made it firm on the outside, and covered it as well as he could. And Billfrith, the anchorite, he wrought in smith's work the ornaments that are on the outside, and adorned it with gold, and also with gems, overlayed with silver, unalloyed metal. And Aldred, an unworthy and most miserable priest, with the help of God and St. Cuthbert, glossed it above in English, and made himself familiar with the three parts : Matthew's part for God and St. Cuthbert ; Mark's part for the Bishop ; and Luke's part for the brotherhood, and eight oras [ora equals sixteen pence] of silver for his admission ; and St. John's part for himself, and four oras of silver [deposited] with God and St. Cuthbert ; to the end that he may, through God's mercy, gain admittance into heaven, and on earth happiness and peace, promotion and dignity, wisdom and prudence, through St. Cuthbert's merits. Eadfrith, Ethilwald, Billfrith [and] Aldred made and adorned this gospel book for God and St. Cuthbert,"

By studying the work in these Gospels an expert would find little difficulty in completing the original design from this single corner piece. It will be noticed that the border is made up of complicated interlacings of a very intricate character ; the centre would most probably be occupied by a cross, and the vacant spaces ornamented with decorative work or more interlacings.

Now we know from Bede that the Lindisfarne Gospels were designed and finished some 25 years after the building of this church was begun, and not long after the death of Benedict Biscop which took place A.D. 690 ; and we know how limited would be the number of those competent to produce such artistic work, therefore it is not at all unlikely that one of the artists who designed the work was the same as he who carved this stone.

Biscop died at Wearmouth and was buried "hard by the altar," and is it not probable that the most beautiful ornamented stone possible would be placed over his grave, over the remains of him whom the monks would naturally honour above all others, as the founder and builder of their beloved church? So perhaps we have in this small fragment a memorial of

the founder, not merely of St. Peter's church but of Sunderland itself.

Of the church as it now stands, the nave occupies the site of the original church; the west wall stands still as built by Benedict Biscop more than twelve centuries ago; the south wall has been rebuilt on the original foundations; no trace could be found of the foundations of the north wall, but careful measurements place it where the pillars now stand. The north aisle and the transept, which is dedicated to St. Laurence, are of much later date.

The chancel belongs to the thirteenth century. About 1790 it, with the other parts of the church, was made hideous with galleries; the chancel window was blocked up or cut in two by the gallery. It was restored in 1875 by the skill of the Rev. J. F. Hodgson, one of the foremost archæologists in the North, from fragments of ancient tracery found in it.

The stained glass windows here and in the transept are of more than ordinary interest. The figures in the noble east window represent entirely local Saints, with the one exception of the patron Saint, St. Peter, who occupies the centre division. Below each figure is a beauti-

ful picture representing some important event in the life of the Saint above. Thus St. Aidan on the north side is shewn preaching in Northumbria ; Benedict Biscop as directing the building operations of this church ; St. Peter is seen receiving the keys of heaven ; Paulinus, the first Archbishop of York, is baptizing King Edwin ; and the Venerable Bede is depicted studying in his cell at Jarrow.

The south windows represent St. Cuthbert with St. Oswald's head in his arms, the picture below pourtraying his consecration ; next to him is Oswald himself, with the battle of Heavenfield below. The other window has St. Hilda, of Whitby, giving counsel, and King Edwin with his High Priest Coifi destroying the heathen gods.

An effigy of one of the Barons of Hilton reposes beneath a canopy which was carved for the tomb of another, but all trace of whom it was intended for is lost. It stands now a monument of man's transitory nature. The mortal to whose memory an elaborate monument was carved is totally forgotten, and the effigy beneath is merely known to be that of *one* of the Hiltons !

In the transept the windows (which like those in the chancel are the work of Messrs. Kemp) are dedicated to St. Laurence, St. Paul, St. Stephen, John the Baptist, and St. Mary.

JAMES PATTERSON.

APPENDIX IV.

THE BEDE MEMORIAL CROSS.

THE Cross in Roker Cliff Park, Sunderland, to the memory of the Venerable Bede, was unveiled by the Archbishop of York in the presence of a numerous and distinguished body of spectators, on 11th October, 1904. Mr. Hodges, of Hexham, was the architect, and he was aided by an executive committee consisting of some of the foremost scholars. It consists of three stones only, is from ground level to top 23 feet 6 inches, and its total weight is estimated at $11\frac{1}{2}$ tons.

The principal front faces eastward ; the five panels contain bas-reliefs of scenes in Bede's life, the interlacing serpents forming them are adapted from those on the jambs of the porch in the tower of Monkwearmouth church ; the ground-work between the panels is taken from illuminations of the time of Bede or stones of the same period. On the base are nine lines in English of Bede's hymn, commencing

"Ere a man goes hence
Faring as all need fare."

The north side, perhaps the most beautiful of

all, shows heads of Bede's teachers and friends: Trumbercht, Doctor; Benedict Biscop, Abbot, founder; Ecgfrith, King of Northumbria, 670-685; John, the Arch-Chanter; Eosterwine, Abbot; Sigfrith, Abbot; Ceolfrith, Abbot; Acca, Bishop; Huæthercht, Abbot; Ceowulf, King; Ecgbercht, Archbishop. On the base Bede's hymn is given in runes.

The west side bears two extracts from Bede's writings, the upper part from his *Life of St. Cuthbert*, and the lower from the preface to his *Ecclesiastical History*. The hymn is this time in Latin.

On the south side the hymn is in minuscule character, and the shaft is occupied by a conventional scroll adapted from those on the Bewcastle and Ruthwell crosses.

This short description is abbreviated from Mr. Hodges' account in Canon Rawnsley's *Life and Work of Bede*,* to which the reader is referred for the more elaborate and more complete description of which this beautiful memorial is so worthy.

JAMES PATTERSON.

* *The Venerable Bede: his Life and Work*. By Rev. Canon Rawnsley. With an Appendix, giving some account of Anglian Art in Northern Britain, and a description of the Bede Memorial, with illustrations and folding plates, by C. C. Hodges. Paper 2s. net; cloth 3s. 6d. net.

APPENDIX V.

NOTES ON THE LIFE OF THE
REV. PETER WILCOCK.

PETER WILCOCK, born 28 October, 1777, was the son of George and Ann Wilcock, of Bolton; this George was the younger son of James and Margery Wilcock of Thorpe Green, Brindle, Lancashire, land surveyor. His great uncle was Dom. Peter Wilcock, O.S.B. ; he went to Simm George Bordley's school at Ince Blundell ; admitted at Lisbon, in the Bordley Fund, 10 October, 1792 ; alumnus 8 December, 1801 ; priest 25 December, 1802 ; retained as a Professor ; returned to England 28 December, 1808. He was stationed for a short time at Ladywell, Ferryhalgh, in the County of Lancashire. He then removed to Sunderland, living in Dunning Street, and succeeding Rev. Wm. Fletcher in charge of that Mission in 1812 ; it was here in 1818 that he published his translation of Bede's *Lives of the Abbots*.

In 1825 he removed to St. Anthony's, Liverpool, where he was instrumental in erecting new church schools and presbytery in 1830; in 1844 he retired, but remained in Liverpool, where he died 15 August, 1857, aged 79 years.

JAMES PATTERSON.



Hills and Co.'s Publications.

Bede, The Venerable. Lives of the First Five Abbots of Wearmouth : Benedict, Ceolfrid, Easterwine, Sigfrid, and Huetbert. . Translated from the Latin of the Venerable Bede, to which is prefaced a Life of the Author. By the Rev. Peter Wilcock. Reprinted from Garbutt's edition, with a facsimile of the original engraved title page. 1910. Demy 8vo. 5/- net.

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